

see p. 2
B-3

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 1

MARCH, 1951

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

THIS is the 217th issue of this little bulletin. With it we begin the nineteenth volume. We are happy to report that our circulation now stands at its highest figure. The universal acclaim of LP recordings has created a new interest in record collecting and thus during the last couple of years we have received an unusually large number of new subscribers. We wish to take this occasion to welcome these new readers and to say a word of appreciation for the faithful support of many old-timers, some of whom have been with us since Vol. 1, No. 1.

At the first of the year, because of the increased size of THE NEW RECORDS, it was necessary to raise the yearly subscription rate to one dollar. At that time we made a special offer to our subscribers. If they send in their renewals by 31 March 1951, we will extend their subscriptions for three years upon payment of two dollars. Nearly two thousand subscribers have already taken advantage of this offer. If you have not done so and would like to, please see that your renewal is postmarked not later than 31 March 1951. There is still time if you act promptly.

Because of the vast number of renewals that we have received within the last few weeks, it has been impossible for us to check our mailing list and so we are carrying over all subscribers whether they have renewed or not. We cannot continue this practice beyond this month.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last eighteen years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove rec-

ords have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Music of Lecuona. Robin Hood Dell Orchestra—Morton Gould. One side, and *String Time.* Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*CML-4361) \$5.45. (TNR Sep. '49 & Mar. '47).

Strauss: *Highlights from "Die Fledermaus."* Soloists with the Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra—Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-305) \$5.95. (TNR Jan. '51).

Blitzstein: *No for an Answer* (excerpts). Carol Channing and other soloists with piano accompaniment by Marc Blitzstein. 1-12" disc (*THEME-TALP-103) \$5.95. (TNR May '41).

ORCHESTRA



Dvorák: *Symphony in E-flat (1873).* One and one-half sides, and Dvorák: *Scherzo Capriccioso in E minor, Op. 66.* Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-50-29) \$5.95.

In addition to the five symphonies of Dvorák, with which we are familiar, there are also three others written before that which is now catalogued as his first. The first (of these three) was written in 1865 and marked Op. 3, the second in the same year was marked Op. 4, and the third, here recorded, was completed in 1873, when Dvorák was thirty-one. The first two were never performed, but the third was presented by Smetana, and won for its composer an increased government stipend.

The most striking characteristic of the *Symphony in E flat* is its uncompromising Wagnerism. The Wagnerian procedures are evident in the melodic, harmonic, and modulatory plan. At times, entire phrases are transplanted from Wagner's operas into the score of the *Symphony*. Many Wagnerian motives pass in review, as quotations are heard from about seven operas. Dvorák was well aware of his dependence on Wagner, and tried to free himself from it. What saved him from becoming a midget Wagnerling was his personal association and friendship

with Brahms. After his liberation from Wagnerian enchantment, he found himself and turned to the sources of national Bohemian music. Brahms, fortunately, was not a charmer, but lent gentle guidance.

We will not hesitate to say that we found the symphony quite charming. Its melodies are lush and obvious—the whole thing is as easy to take as *Gaité Parisienne*. Before the first movement is over, you will be humming the tunes right with the orchestra.

The filler on this LP disc is the orchestral study *Scherzo Capriccioso*, another delightfully melodious work—this time completely free of Wagner. Who can resist this gentle and beautiful work? Both works are superbly played by the dependable Swoboda and his fine orchestra, and recorded with fidelity that ranks with the very best today. S.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G.** Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-226) \$4.95.

As we played this little LP disc, we had a feeling that we were hearing these famous works very much as they must have sounded in Bach's time. What is missing in fine polish is more than made up in the spirit of the players and the seeming authenticity that prevails throughout the performances. We thoroughly enjoyed both sides of this disc and we are going to play it again and again as opportunity affords.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 3 in D minor. Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1065) \$5.95.

Bruckner is famous for his Scherzo movements; even those who do not care for his symphonies generally like these short and clever scherzo sections. The *Third Symphony* has one of the most powerful efforts in this form. It represents free developments on whirling violin figures and a more song-like counter-theme. The accompanying trio is an elaborate statement and working-up of a waltz-like theme. A profound admirer of Wagner, Bruckner showed this symphony to Wagner for approval, and then dedicated it to him. It is a work of obvious genius, its heroic grandeur, ecstatic utterances, the genuine quality of folklore in its Scherzo and the dramatic Finale and radiant coda contributing to its over-all beauty.

Bruckner today is performed with great frequency in Austria, and is considered one of the greatest symphonists. His music has yet to achieve anything like such popularity in this country, but there is a fair chance that its popularity will steadily increase. With a few more Long Playing records giving uninterrupted performances, and their resulting radio playings, we would imagine he will become better known in the next decade. Bruckner's symphonies have been termed "cathedral" in sound; yet they are charged with sensitivity of the most exquisite kind. Their atmosphere is vastly compelling, and every-

where there is apparent a sense of beauty easily comprehended by the listener.

The greater the conductor and the greater the lung-power of the orchestra, the greater also is any performance of a Bruckner symphony. While the present forces do not rival the Vienna Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic, Furtwängler, or Bruno Walter, they are nevertheless good and sincere. We would say this reading has a native feeling that is excellent, and for the most part the execution by the orchestra is good. It is the first and only recording available and well worth your investigation. S.

Strauss — arr. Dorati: Der Rosenkavalier — Suite.

Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Antal Dorati. 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1475) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1475) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-48) \$4.67.

Dorati has arranged this very charming music into a most effective suite for orchestra. The Cincinnati Symphony under Eugene Goossens made a recording of it many years ago, and now we have it directed by Dorati himself with the very excellent Robin Hood Dell Orchestra. It is the sort of music that most anyone may enjoy, and thus this recording should enjoy wide popularity.

Bernstein: The Age of Anxiety (Symphony No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra). Lukas Foss (piano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 4-12" discs in album (C-MM-946) \$6.19. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4325) \$4.85.

Leonard Bernstein has already managed to cram more accomplishments into his thirty-odd years than many musicians do in a whole lifetime—enough to make some of us wonder how long and how far he can pursue his three-legged race as pianist, conductor, and composer. This second symphony is further proof of his extreme versatility and unusual talent.

The work was inspired by W. H. Auden's *The Age of Anxiety: A Baroque Eclogue*, in Bernstein's words "a fascinating and hair-raising" poem which moved him to compose a symphony with almost compulsive force. The result is fascinating enough in its technical aspects, though hardly compulsive as a musical masterpiece.

The literary synopsis accompanying his score suggests another "Lost Weekend" of mounting proportions, as four lonely characters seek to drown their own conflicts while hoping for that elusive and problematical faith this twentieth century so desperately needs. If one takes the trouble to follow this programmatic thread closely while listening, one is aware that Bernstein has handled his subject very skillfully, but at the same time there is the question lurking in one's mind—isn't this more a ballet score than a symphony? Surely some choreographer will eventually adapt it to his own imagination.

The prominent piano part is as appropriate in either ballet or symphony as it is unusual, and Lukas Foss plays it with the utmost clarity, feeling and

vitality.

This use of the piano and the subtitle "Symphony No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra" is closely related to the composer's personal identification of himself with the poem, and the care with which he has woven the keyboard instrument into the tonal fabric is a stimulating achievement. His performance from the podium may be considered authoritative, and the recording is excellent. E.

Dvorák: Slavonic Dances, Op. 46 and Op. 72. FOK Symphony Orchestra (Prague) conducted by Karel B. Jirák. 2-12" discs in album (*ME-MGL-4) \$9.70.

For all their folk quality, the themes of Dvorák's *Slavonic Dances* are entirely original with the composer—unlike those of Brahms Hungarian dances, some of which were settings of traditional folk or gypsy melodies. Though the *Slavonic Dances* were polished in both keyboard and orchestral format, there seems little doubt that Dvorák himself had the varied instrumental palette of the symphony orchestra uppermost in mind at the time of writing them. He toiled six months over the orchestration of the second set, and in this form they sounded, as he put it, "like the devil!"

At his publisher's request Dvorák set to paper his first set of Eight Slavonic Dances, Op. 46. He was paid 300 marks for the job; and in the years immediately following, the publisher made a fortune out of their huge success. For the second set of Slavonic Dances, Op. 72, written ten years later, the composer was paid ten times that amount.

The dances of Op. 72 are both more varied in character and more symphonic in conception than those of the earlier set. The Slavonic Dances conclude on a note of yearning and eloquent lyricism, No. 8 of Op. 72 taking the form of a Sousedska in A-flat in which the composer seems to be bidding farewell to the impulsive and carefree days of his youth. Of the sixteen dances in both sets, at least five or six are quite familiar to most symphonic fans. There is no denying their charm and their wonderful rhythmic qualities so nicely combined with graceful melodies.

The earthiness, the content, and the native feeling are realized by the conductor of this first complete recording of the works. We cannot, however, fail to mention the calibre of the performing orchestra, which is a most ordinary group. There is no comparison between this group and any recording symphony orchestra in this country. It is too bad some top-notch European orchestra was not used for a recording of this importance. And the reproduction is as dull as the orchestra. S.

Malipiero: Symphony No. 7 ("Delle Canzoni"). One side, and **Bach—arr. Casella: Suite No. 2 in D minor—Chaconne.** EIAR Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*CE-50,044) \$5.95.

Cetra makes a really strong entry into the field of orchestral releases with this, their most successful

and distinguished recording. The *Chaconne* is the principal movement of Bach's *Suite No. 2 in D minor for Violin Solo*. Various transcriptions of this monumental piece exist. Casella's for orchestra is a well thought out and rather convincing affair that has found acceptance by some major conductors. It is, in a way, not too unlike what we have heard from Stokowski along these lines. We will exit from any possible controversy with Casella's own words: "... As for any who may consider these and other liberties excessive, I should like to remind them of the musical usage in the time of Bach himself, and above all, the surprising impartiality with which he transcribed continually not only his own music but also that of others . . . I frankly believe that my apparent audacities will seem of small consequence beside those used by Bach in his organ transcription of the *Concerto Grosso in D minor* of Vivaldi." He's got something there, friends!

Generally considered Italy's most prominent composer, G. Francesco Malipiero has written prolifically. His works are performed with but moderate frequency in this country, although there is nothing "modernistic" nor too difficult to fathom in them. The present work, for example, is a nostalgic, romantic, richly textured work that might almost be described as peaceful music. There is strength in it, and full, generous orchestration. It is curiously reminiscent to us of various styles from Bruckner to some of our modern contemporaries. But it is nonetheless original and definitely of Italian origin. We were impressed by it.

Dimitri Mitropoulos brings his customary stamp of intensity and sincerity to these admirable performances, and we have the feeling he is making an ordinary orchestra sound a lot better than it would in less skillful hands. They are touched with the divine spark more than once on this disc. Reproduction is splendid. S.

Gould: Philharmonic Waltzes. N. Y. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. And **Gould: Symphony No. 2 ("On Marching Tunes")—Quickstep.** N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by Morton Gould. One side, and **Griffes: The White Peacock, Op. 7, No. 1.** And **Copland: Billy the Kid—Prairie Night; Celebration Dance.** N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2167) \$4.

Gould: Philharmonic Waltzes. N. Y. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (C-13139D) \$1.31.

In *Philharmonic Waltzes* Mr. Gould has composed a diverting capsule history of the waltz with his mocking commentary apparent from time to time. The *Quickstep* from his Second Symphony is frequently featured as an encore number and derives some of its success from its use of marching tunes and ballads. As for *The White Peacock* and the *Billy the Kid* excerpts which complete this disc, we refer our

readers to our issues of February and March 1949 in which the original releases were reviewed.

Respighi: Feste Romane ("Roman Festivals"). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1490) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-55) \$4.67.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B minor ("Unfinished"). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1456) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1456) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-54) \$4.67.

Maestro Toscanini is represented this month by two discs of a decidedly different nature. Schubert's ever-popular "Unfinished" Symphony receives an especially thoughtful reading. When we consider how often it is performed and recorded, and how little of worth can be extracted from it at this late date, it is always amazing to find a new aspect of this work exploited. Perhaps it is Toscanini's minimum of tricks that does it, because the composition itself needs no pointing-up. Respighi's *Feste Romane*, a comparative newcomer to recorded music, is a colorful work that almost sells itself. It has no profundity, as is usually the case with a symphonic poem, but it has a great deal of animation and good spirit. It is indeed a fitting contrast to Mr. Toscanini's first offering and also serves to illustrate this conductor's ability to vary his pace.

Mozart: Symphony No. 33 in B-flat, K. 319. One side, and **Mozart: Serenade in G, K. 525** ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik") and **Mozart: Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K. 546.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*CML-54370) \$5.45.

We are pleased to note that the recording companies are paying tribute to Mozart as well as to Haydn. Here is presented for the first time since the advent of long-playing records, Mozart's *Symphony No. 33*. While it does not have the heavier orchestration of Mozart's last symphonies, it has a charm of perfection that makes one aware of the fact that mere volume of sound is not always necessary in putting a musical idea across. The richness and clarity of the strings makes this a truly worthwhile disc, with the added attraction of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* beautifully rendered on the reverse side. As a "bonus," one might say, the sonorous, Bach-like *Adagio and Fugue in C minor* completes the disc.

Haydn: Symphony No. 104 in D ("London"). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1476) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1476) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-49) \$4.67.

This excellent LP recording of one of Haydn's most charming symphonies by the Boston Symphony under its new permanent conductor, Charles Münch, far outclasses the other LP version of this work by the Bavarian Radio Orchestra issued under the Mer-

cury label. In fact, we cannot imagine a finer recorded version of this symphony than the one Mr. Münch provides on the present LP disc.

Bach—trans. Stokowski: Komm', süßer Tod. One side, and **Purcell—trans. Stokowski: Dido and Aeneas—When I am laid in earth** (Act III). Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-12-3087) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3087) \$1.16.

Stokowski is noted for his transcriptions of music of another age. The present disc contains two of his loveliest works in that form. He performs them with loving care, and the reproduction is of the best.

CONCERTO



Ravel: Piano Concerto for the Left Hand. Jacqueline Blanchard (piano) with L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Charles Münch. One side, and **Ravel: Concerto in G for Piano & Orchestra** (1932). Nicole Henriot (piano) with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-76) \$5.95.

Musically this disc has much to recommend it; technically it is only fair. The coupling of Ravel's two concertos on the same record is not only a good choice for sales appeal, but the two works should be considered together, since in Ravel's own words they were "conceived and realized simultaneously." Some of the ideas and material which the composer originally intended for the G major work were ultimately deemed unsuitable, and these he incorporated into the left hand opus for the Austrian pianist Paul Wittgenstein, who lost his right arm in action during World War I.

From the artists and orchestras employed here one would expect a definitive performance. Both pianists do carry out their assignments very well, especially Mme. Blanchard, but she has the advantage of material which is in itself nothing short of a *tour-de-force*. She makes the most of it. Mlle. Henriot, the twenty-three year old Parisian whom we heard in the G major concerto recently with Münch and the Bostonians, plays with the right amount of youthful abandon to give a convincing performance, especially in the jazz elements.

Her attempted nuances in the expressive solo at the beginning of the slow movement are marred by surface noise (on the review copy at least), as are other subdued sections throughout. This matter of surface interference, and in this case of only a fair pickup, is more than a little discouraging when we see elsewhere what can be done on LP pressings.

However, it is a pleasure to be able to play the two concertos from the same package, so to speak. Ravel was a genius at painting master strokes of color on his tonal canvases, and both Münch and Ansermet, particularly the latter, know how to draw these colors from the orchestral palette before them.

E.

* Indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

Leopold Mozart: Concerto in D for Trumpet and Orchestra. Marcel Frei (trumpet) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Dahinden. One side, and **K. P. E. Bach: Concerto in G for Flute and Orchestra.** Aurele Nicolet (flute) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Dahinden. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1077) \$5.95.

On this unusual and highly interesting disc we have examples of the compositions of a father of a most distinguished son and the son of a supremely celebrated father. Leopold Mozart was the father of Wolfgang and K. P. E. Bach was the son of Johann Sebastian.

Of particular interest to us was Leopold Mozart's Concerto for trumpet and orchestra. There are certainly very few such works in all musical literature, and as far as we can remember this is the first to be recorded. Marcel Frei is a master of his instrument and he is splendidly supported by an appropriate orchestra. We have nothing but praise for this performance, and those music lovers who might find such a work attractive will surely be pleased with the present recording.

As far as our research was able to develop, this is the first recording of K. P. E. Bach's *Concerto in G for Flute and Orchestra*. It is a lively and pleasing work and gives the fine European flautist, Aurele Nicolet, ample opportunity to display his great skill. He produces most beautiful tones that make the lovely melodies provided for him by the composer a joy to listen to. The recording has been accomplished with great fidelity.

Wieniawski: Concerto No. 2 in D minor for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 22. Mischa Elman (violin) with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Alexander Hilsberg. 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1504) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1504) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-53) \$4.67.

It may well be that music lovers are under the impression that Wieniawski wrote only one violin concerto. In spite of the fact that this one is labeled *No. 2 in D minor, Op. 22*, we wonder whether there ever was a *No. 1*. Be that as it may, Wieniawski's contribution to violin literature is always welcome when it is played by a virtuoso of Mischa Elman's stature, whether or not we ever hear *Concerto No. 1*. Mr. Elman is given fine support by the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra under the baton of Alexander Hilsberg.

Mozart: Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra in A, K. 622. Reginald Kell (clarinet) with the Zimmler Sinfonietta conducted by Josef Zimmler. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7500) \$3.85.

Several recordings have been made of this lovely Mozart concerto, but we doubt whether any of them are more attractive than the present version. Reginald Kell is an outstanding artist—he made a 78 rpm recording of this work with London Philharmonic a

number of years ago—and we are sure that music lovers generally will be highly pleased with his present version on this Decca LP disc.

Boccherini: Concerto in B-flat for 'Cello and Orchestra. Leo Koscielny (violoncello) with the Orchestra of the Munich Radio conducted by Hans Rosbaud. One side, and **Boccherini: Quintet in C.** Herschenhan Quartet and Fritz Kiskalt (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*VOX-PL-6560) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHAMBER MUSIC.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Sonata No. 9 in A for Violin and Piano, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"). Zino Francescatti (violin) and Robert Casadesu (piano). 4-12" discs in album (C-MM-949) \$6.19. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4327) \$5.45.

Now there certainly is no need for another LP recording of Beethoven's famous "Kreutzer" Sonata, the present one by Francescatti and Casadesu being superb; we cannot imagine a better one. These French artists are close friends, and their ensemble work indicates the fine harmony that exists between them. This is the sort of thing that makes for chamber music *par excellence*. When we consider the fine Columbia LP reproduction, we have a disc that we can recommend without reservation.

Boccherini: Concerto in B-flat for 'Cello and Orchestra. Leo Koscielny (violoncello) with the Orchestra of the Munich Radio conducted by Hans Rosbaud. One side, and **Boccherini: Quintet in C.** Herschenhan Quartet and Fritz Kiskalt (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*VOX-PL-6560) \$5.95.

Boccherini: Trio No. 1 in F minor, Op. 35. One side, and **Boccherini: Trio No. 3 in E, Op. 35** and **Boccherini: Trio No. 6 in E, Op. 35.** Walter Schneiderhan and Gustav Swoboda (violins); Senta Benesch (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-50-46) \$5.95.

Boccherini: Trio No. 5 in C, Op. 35 and **Boccherini: Trio No. 2 in G, Op. 35.** One side, and **Boccherini: Trio No. 4 in D, Op. 35.** Walter Schneiderhan and Gustav Swoboda (violins); Senta Benesch (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-50-42) \$5.95.

Boccherini, in spite of an appellation of the time—a contemporary wit referred to him as "the wife of Haydn"—is coming into his own as a composer with a style all his own and melody enough to please the most jaded chamber music enthusiast. His concerto for violoncello—one of the too few in musical literature—is the only work of major proportions listed here. Pablo Casals' performance may have more polish (V-DM-381) but since this particular album is rapidly moving into the "collector's item" category, we can easily content ourselves with Leo Koscielny.

As for the chamber works under consideration, it

is worth while mentioning here that the two Westminster discs present the entire Opus 35—six trios—which, while it need not be thought of as an integrated series of compositions, has a quiet lyrical beauty throughout, reminiscent of Haydn but with more of the Italian melodic line. It seems significant, rather than coincidental, that Boccherini was born the year Vivaldi died.

Mozart: Serenade No. 12 in C minor, K. 388. One side, and **Mozart: Serenade No. 11 in E-flat, K. 375.** Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-50-21) \$5.95.

Mozart: Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K. Anh. 9. Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group and Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Henry Swoboda. One side, and **Mozart: Divertimento No. 3 in B-flat, K. Anh. 229.** Leopold Wlach and Franz Bartosek (clarinets) and Karl Oehlberger (bassoon). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-50-20) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quartet in F for Oboe and Strings, K. 370. Hans Kamesch (oboe), Anton Kamper (violin), Erich Weiss (viola) and Franz Kwarda (violoncello). And **Mozart: Quartet No. 1 in D for Flute and Strings, K. 295.** Hans Recniecek (flute) with Anton Kamper, Erich Weiss and Franz Kwarda (strings). And **Mozart: Divertimento No. 2 in B-flat, K. Anh. 229.** Leopold Wlach and Franz Bartosek (clarinets) and Karl Oehlberger (bassoon). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-50-22) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quartet No. 1 in D, K. 285. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet in C, K. 285b** and **Mozart: Quartet No. 2 in A, K. 298.** Julius Baker (flute); Harry Zariel (violin); David Mankovitz (viola); and Ralph Oxman (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*OXFORD OR-101) \$5.95.

From the four LP discs listed above one may arrange two fine concerts of Mozart chamber music. These concerts should be particularly pleasing to those music lovers who are fond of wind instruments for in each selection at least one such instrument is featured. Space available does not permit our more than listing these records. We can, however, state that we have played all of them and can report that the performances are highly satisfactory and that the reproduction rates with the best—record surfaces smooth and quiet.

Schumann: Märchenerzählungen, Op. 132. Leopold Wlach (clarinet); Erich Weiss (viola); and Jorg Demus (piano). One side, and **Mendelssohn: Konzertstücke, Op. 113** and **Mendelssohn: Konzertstücke, Op. 114.** Leopold Wlach (clarinet); Franz Bartosek (basset-horn); and Jorg Demus (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-50-24) \$5.95.

Since the advent of LP recording there has been an avalanche of records containing chamber music works of all kinds—much of it having never been recorded previously. A varietal feast for chamber music lovers!

In the limited space available, one can do little more than list these recordings, with an occasional line or two about some unusual feature. In the present instance, the feature is the use of a basset-horn in the two Mendelssohn compositions. In the notes that accompany this disc, David Randolph calls attention to the fact that George Bernard Shaw, when he was a music critic during the latter years of the 19th century, used the pen-name "Corno di Bassetto." Although Mr. Randolph states that this is an obsolete wind instrument he does not intend his remark to be any reflection upon the venerable Mr. Shaw.

The basset-horn is really a basset and not a horn. It was introduced in about 1770 by a German instrument manufacturer named Horn. He called it "Basset-Horn," which meant a "Little Bass (clarinet made by) Horn." The Italians translated it into "Corno di Bassetto." Actually it is a tenor clarinet.

Many late 18th century and early 19th century composers included this instrument in their works—Mozart was particularly fond of it—but it has now practically disappeared. We doubt that many of our readers have ever heard one.

Mozart: Quartet No. 14 in G, K. 387. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 18 in A, K. 464.** Calvet Quartet: Joseph Calvet and Daniel Guilevitch (violins), Leon Pascal (viola) and Paul Mas (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*CLP-8106) \$4.98.

On this Capitol LP disc we have splendid performances of two of the series of six quartets that Mozart dedicated to Haydn. No. 14 is the first in the group and No. 18 is the fifth. These recordings by the world-famous Calvet Quartet (now disbanded because of the ill health of two of the members) were first released in Europe under the Telefunken label. Capitol has done a good job in transferring them from 78 rpm to this LP disc.

Mozart: Quartet No. 14 in G, K. 387. Seven sides, and **Haydn: Quartet No. 71 in E-flat, Op. 33, No. 2—Presto.** Budapest String Quartet. 4-12" discs in album (C-MM-969) \$6.19.

Mozart: Quartet No. 15 in D minor, K. 421. Budapest String Quartet. Coupled with **Mozart: Quartet No. 14 in G, K. 387.** 1-12" disc (*C-LM-4360) \$5.45.

The release of these superb renditions of two of Mozart's most popular quartets by the famous Budapest String Quartet will be welcome news to chamber music lovers. As Columbia has captured these performances with rare fidelity, this LP disc may be recommended without reservation.

Fauré: Quartet No. 1 in C minor for Piano and Strings, Op. 15. Artur Rubinstein (piano), Henri Temianka (violin), Robert Courte (viola), and Adolphe Frezin (violoncello). 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1493) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-52) \$4.67.

A modern recording of this lovely Fauré work is indeed very welcome. Especially is this so when it is

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

performed by such eminent artists. As we listened to it, we could not help wondering why it is so seldom heard in this country. It is well regarded in France, where Fauré's music is presently experiencing a renaissance. In any case, those music lovers who own phonographs may hear it in as fine a performance as they are ever likely to listen to.

CHORAL



Bach: Cantata No. 56 ("Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen"). Doda Conrad (basso) with vocal and instrumental ensemble directed by Charles Henderson. One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 82** ("Ich habe genug"). Doda Conrad (basso) with instrumental ensemble directed by Charles Henderson. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6760) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 212 ("The Peasant Cantata"). Phyllis Curtin (soprano) and Paul Matthen (bass-baritone) with members of the Cambridge Festival Orchestra directed by Daniel Pinkham. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-82) \$5.95.

Music, to Bach, was the apparatus of worship and, as Parry truly observes in his study of the great man, the line of demarcation between the sacred and the secular forms was, for him, not decisively drawn. The obvious truth of this statement can be tested by the compositions noted above.

The two Church Cantatas, Numbers 56 and 82 in the Bach Gesellschaft Numbering, were probably written, as Doda Conrad points out in his excellent notes accompanying the set, not so much for a church service (although they are assigned to the 19th Sunday after Trinity and the Sunday of the Feast of the Purification of Mary, respectively), but for home performance. The economy of means employed, plus the fact that the texts, while deeply religious, are not taken from the Bible, seems to substantiate this suggestion. Number 56 *Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen* follows the Italian pattern of two recitatives, two arias and a chorale. Number 82 *Ich habe genug* omits the closing chorale and is of a more meditative turn. Mr. Conrad sings with authority and compelling vocalism. The small chorus and orchestra under Charles Henderson add considerably to the success of the enterprise by their tasteful performances. Excellent recording and smooth surfaces are the order of the day.

The Peasant Cantata (No. 212) is an outstanding example of Bach's secular writing. The truth of the above quoted statement by Parry is borne out in a letter Bach wrote to one of his pupils containing the following "... the aim and final reason of all music ... should be nothing else but the Glory of God. Where this is not observed, there will be no real music but only a devilish hubbub." Thus, the same care and thought expended in the composition of the Kirchen Kantaten are employed here with telling effect. The *Cantata* ("We have a new Governor") is stunningly performed by Phyllis Curtin and Paul Matthen, two superb American singers who have a

command of the music and text that is artistically mature. Their fresh, youthful voices add immeasurably to the listener's enjoyment. Seven instrumentalists, with Daniel Pinkham directing from the harpsichord supply inspired accompaniments. And the recording—quite frankly, in view of some of Allegro's previous efforts, one was not prepared for this! It is genuine high fidelity, completely free from rattles and with surfaces that almost embarrass by their quietness. Here is a real musical treat and a technical joy. *Enviva Allegro!* W.

Byrd: Mass for Four Voices. (Sung in Latin.) Fleet Street Choir directed by T. B. Lawrence. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-301) \$4.95.

With Shakespeare, Byrd is undoubtedly one of the most imposing figures of the English Renaissance. He towers easily above such contemporaries as Thomas Tompkins, Orlando Gibbons and John Wilbye. Like most men of the Renaissance he was at once versatile and profound; he wrote church music (for both English and Latin services) and madrigals; he also composed prodigiously for harpsichord, virginals, the organ, and for viols.

Very little is known of his life; even the year of his birth is given variously as 1542 or 1543. He was obviously a man of strong character, for he remained steadfastly Roman Catholic at the time of Elizabeth—and it speaks well for those times that, apart from a few petty annoyances, he was not persecuted. He died at Stondon, Essex, in 1623—full of honors and called the "Father of English Music." After his death his fame was overshadowed by that of Henry Purcell; recently, however, there has been a change of opinion, and there are those who rank Byrd "with or above Palestrina and Lassus, a giant not unfitted to sit beside Bach in the hierarchy of musical genius."

These are strong words, but fortunately the record enthusiast is in a position to form an opinion of his own. The *Mass for Four Voices* as performed by the Fleet Street Choir lends support to the above quotation. This *Mass* has a sombre grace, a remote and mysterious atmosphere that is unique in music. The obscurity surrounding Byrd also extends to the genesis of this work. Speculation as to the time of its composition ranges from 1588 to 1610. In the last analysis, however, such fact seeking can be left to the musicologists. The music is the thing, and it matters not in the least when and how it was written.

The Fleet Street Choir is a professional choir, directed by T. B. Lawrence. They are specialists in such music, and the performance is finely wrought and highly polished. Great care has been exercised to come as close to the original "sound" as possible. The result is a performance that glows—making one realize the beauties of the music of the period. Truly it was the Golden Age of English Music.

London's recording is good, with quiet surfaces. Highly recommended for all lovers of good music—a must for those who are partial to the music of the period. W.

Great Sacred Choruses. Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw with Hugh Porter (organ). 4-12" discs in album (V-DM-1478) \$6.29. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1478) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1117) \$5.72.

The brilliant choral conductor, Robert Shaw, presents a series of fine choral selections, all of a religious character. His excellent mixed chorus gives outstanding renditions, and RCA Victor has supplied splendid reproduction throughout.

The great *Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel's "Messiah" is perhaps the most popular work included in this collection—an excerpt that displays the gigantic musical conception and profound religious feeling of its composer. The chorale also sings three choruses which are equally deserving of their interpretive talents: the Mozart *Ave Verum*, Beethoven's *Hallelujah* from "The Mount of Olives" and *Thou Must Leave Thy Lowly Dwellings*, a New Testament setting by French composer, Berlioz.

The Sanctus from Gounod's "St. Cecilia Mass," the majestic *The Heavens Are Telling* from Haydn's "The Creation," *He Watching Over Israel* from Mendelssohn's "Elijah" and *God So Loved The World* from Stainer's "The Crucifixion" comprise the balance of this unusual choral presentation by the Shaw group.

Mozart: Vesperae de Dominica, K. 321. (Sung in Latin). Soloists; Reinhart Chorus of Zurich; Winterthur Mixed Chorus; and Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Reinhart; featuring Arthur Baum (organ). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1083) \$5.95.

This vesper of Mozart's will be entirely new to American music lovers because in all probability it has never been sung in this country. In fact, until Walter Reinhart prepared it for performance in Zurich, there is no record of its having been sung since the time of its composer. It is in the usual form, consisting of musical settings for five psalms and concluding with the *Magnificat*. Between the last psalm and the *Magnificat*, Reinhart has introduced a beautiful hymn which he composed in the tradition of the period.

The soloists are all of high calibre; the choruses, supporting orchestra, and organist are all deserving of unstinted praise. As the reproduction is first-class this is a disc that we can recommend to all lovers of religious choral music.

Don Cossack Chorus Sing Religious Music. Don Cossack Chorus directed by Serge Jaroff. 4-12" discs in album (C-MM-972) \$6.19. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2163) \$4.

The Don Cossack Chorus brings us in vibrant, full-bodied performances a fine collection of religious music, most of it written for the service of the Russian Church and all of it rich in the drama and devotion and exaltation that hold significance for people of every country. There are eight songs in all, four of

them traditional and the others written by such famous composers as Tchaikovsky, Gretchaninoff, Rachmaninoff.



OPERA

Opera Recital. Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*CE-50.031) \$5.95.

Orfeo ed Euridice—Che farò senza Euridice (Act II).

Alceste—Divinités du Styx (Act I).

Semiramide—Ah, quel giorno ognor rammento.

Il Barbiere di Siviglia—Una voce poco fa (Act I).

Samson et Dalila, Op. 47—Printemps qui commence (Act I); Amour! viens aider ma faiblesse (Act II); Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix (Act II).

Opera Recital. Pia Tassinari (soprano) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*CE-50.033) \$5.95.

Le Nozze di Figaro, K. 492—Deh vieni, non tardar (Act IV).

Adriana Lecouvreur—Io sono l'umile ancella (Act I).

La Bohème—Donde lieta uscì (Act III); Addio dolce svegliare, Che facevi, che dicevi (Act III) (Quartet, with Huder, Tagliavini and Mascherini).

Manon—Adieu, notre petite table (Act II).

Mignon—Connais-tu le pays? (Act I).

L'Amico Fritz—Son pochi fiori (Act I); Non mi resta che il pianto (Act III).

Cavalleria Rusticana—Voi lo sapete, o mamma.

The various recordings of two celebrated Italian singers have been collected by Cetra-Soria and arranged on two LP records, thereby making a veritable feast for all lovers of opera and of fine singing.

Mme. Stignani needs no introduction to American audiences. Her rich, opulent mezzo, with its brilliant upper register, is heard to great advantage in the above listed arias. Of special interest are the arias from *Semiramide* and *Alceste*. In the former we have a first recording of some Rossini's finest passages sung in superb fashion. The latter is far and away the most satisfying recording of the difficult and majestic aria, sung by *Alceste* in the first act. The only regret concerning Ebe Stignani's performance of the *Alceste* music is her use of an Italian text. The French is more suitable, more musical and more dramatic. This stricture also applies to the three selections from *Samson et Dalila*. Mme. Stignani is a luscious Dalila and her projection of the music is a joy to the ear and to the mind. Her only failure on the disc is her performance of *Una voce poco fa* from "Il Barbiere di Siviglia." Vocally, of course, she negotiates all the coloratura passages and sings with perfect method. The difficulty is the size and timbre of her voice—

she sounds a far too knowing Rosina. Also lacking is the requisite sense of humor.

Pia Tassinari has been over-shadowed, in this country at least, by the fame of her husband, Ferruccio Tagliavini. This is a pity for she is a great and sincere artist. She has a warm, vibrant lyric-dramatic soprano voice that is used with intelligence and uncommon regard for the music and text of whatever she sings. In short, she is a singing actress of a type all too rare in this day and age. She runs the gamut in this disc from Mozart (the real test of a singer) through Massenet and Puccini to Cilea and Mascagni. In all instances she is dramatically faithful both to style and mood. It is a magnificent show—a *tour de force*.

Possibly the finest section of the record is the *Bohème* music beginning with *Donde lieta uscì* and continuing with the quartet that closes the act. It is certain that such ecstatic singing is seldom captured on wax. In somewhat the same mood, but with subtle stylistic differences, is *Adieu, notre petite table* from "Manon." This aria, sung in excellent French by the way, is equalled only by the considerably older Ninon Vallin recording for pathos and charm. And so one could go on down the list. Each selection is a gem and is thoughtfully prepared by a great artist. One can ask for nothing more.

Both records are supplied with the complete text and English translation of all the arias. The recording is uniformly good. W.

Gluck: Orfeo ed Euridice (abridged version). (Sung in French). Germaine Feraldy and Jany Delille (sopranos); Alice Raveau (contralto); with the Alexis Vlasoff Choir and Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henri Tomasi. 1-12" disc (*VX-PTL-6780) \$5.95.

Gluck's *Orpheus* is, perhaps, the oldest opera in the active repertory and, in its revised form, contains some of the Chevalier's finest music. The book, which is the work of Raniero di Calzabigi, was a drastic change from the previous libretti that were usually stilted and completely lacking in dramatic action. In its first version, *Orpheus* was an Italian opera and was presented in Vienna on 5 October 1762. It was a triumphant success; later Gluck further revised it, translated the libretto into French, and as *Orphée* it was given in Paris on 2 August 1774, again with instantaneous success.

The present recording will not be new to older record enthusiasts, but it has been unobtainable for so long that it truthfully can be treated as a "new" release. Originally recorded in France, by Pathé, back in the mid-thirties, it is still an excellent recording and, of course, always was a performance to conjure with. Alice Raveau, who sings the title role, is, in addition to being a sterling artist, the possessor of one of the most luscious contraltos ever heard. Never excessively throaty nor nasal, she achieves a dignity and expressiveness in the part that defy description. And what a pleasure it is to hear good

French well sung! The late Germaine Feraldy sings Euridice with her accustomed finesse and beauty of tone. She makes an ideal foil for the golden-voiced Raveau. Jany Delille, as Amour, completes this amazingly fine trio of women's voices. The D'Alexis Vlasoff Choir and the Paris Symphony Orchestra under Henri Tomasi's sensitive direction contribute, in no small measure, to the memorable performance here achieved.

The only regret to be voiced about this performance concerns the drastic cutting to which the score was subjected in the original recording and in the LP version the *Dance of the Furies* and the *Dance of the Blessed Spirits* have been omitted. Enough has been retained, however, to give an adequate conception of the music. And it is cause for rejoicing that this recording has been made available again to music lovers.

The transference from the original standard discs has entailed some loss in tonal quality but one gains the advantages accruing from uninterrupted performance. W.

Mozart: Idomeneo, Re di Creta, K. 366 (abridged). (Sung in German). Marianne Schech, Maud Cunits (sopranos); Franz Klarwein, Gottfried Riedner, Kurt Messerschmidt (tenors); Heinz Maria Lins (baritone); and Maximilian Eibel (basso) with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Hans Altmann. 2-12" discs in album (*ME-MGL-5) \$9.70.

Mercury Records' recording of *Idomeneo* is as unlike the Haydn Society's issue (TNR Sept. '50) of the same opera as could be imagined. The Mercury set is in a version by Wolf-Ferrari and the music shows the nerveless hand of the arranger, as all such editions must. The chief excuse for the mutilation seems to have been the slow action, dramatically speaking, of the original. Be this as it may, Mozart was a man of the theatre second to none—he could have cut and re-arranged, but he didn't. The principal reason the action seems slow in ordinary performances is not the libretto or the music; it is the usually unschooled and relatively incompetent singers plus the apparent inability of present day audiences to approach a work from another era in any way other than one of ridicule and contempt. The Haydn Society's recording proves this; a proper, intelligent presentation of *Idomeneo* is not dull; on the contrary it is full of high excitement and, at times, melodrama. As might be expected, the tinkering and wholesale butchery performed by Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari and Ernst Leopold Stahl, his librettist, have merely given us a work that is neither fish, flesh nor fowl.

The cast assembled for this unhappy production includes some excellent singers. Franz Klarwein is fine in the title role; he has a good sense of style and is extremely capable at all times. Maud Cunits, as Ilia, is well cast. She has a very sympathetic soprano and makes the most of her major arias. Somewhat less satisfactory are Marianne Schech as Electra and

Gottfried Reidner as Idamante. Miss Schech is inclined to be shrill on high notes and Mr. Reidner is not always happy with his intonation. The Bavarian Radio Chorus and Orchestra under Hans Altmann sing and play all the notes accurately but do nothing more—there is very little imagination in their performance.

The overall effect is one that is disheartening. Wolf-Ferrari has taken one of the operatic masterpieces of all time and turned it into a poor "Italian" opera. Sung in inappropriate German this set has virtually nothing to recommend it; even the recording is mediocre. The Haydn Society's set (*HSLP-2020; \$23.80), at two and one-half times the price, is an infinitely greater bargain. W.

Saint-Saëns: Samson et Dalila, Op. 47—Printemps qui commence (Act I). One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Samson et Dalila, Op. 47**—Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix (Act II). (Sung in French). Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-12" disc (V-13-3104) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3104) \$1.16.

Miss Thebom sings these arias from Saint-Saëns' "Samson et Dalila" very beautifully and with a fine sense of the text. She is well supported by an excellent orchestra under the able direction of Warwick Braithwaite.

Mozart Arias. (Sung in German). Peter Anders (tenor) with the German Opera House Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8084) \$3.98.

Die Entführung aus dem Serail, K. 384—Hier soll ich dich denn sehen (Act I); Constanze, Constanze, dich wiederzusehen (Act I); In Mohrenland gefangen (Act III).

Don Giovanni, K. 527—Nur ihrem Frieden (Act I); Folget der Heissgeliebten (Act II).

Die Zauberflöte, K. 620—Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön (Act I).

Peter Anders, known for many years in central European countries as a Mozart specialist, is here heard in six arias on a 10-inch LP record, issued by Capitol.

The undertaking is eminently successful, for not only is the dubbing from 78 r.p.m. surfaces a masterly job, but Mr. Anders also sustains his reputation as a possessor of true Mozartian style.

Particularly attractive are the three selections from *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, in which opera Mr. Anders is more or less of a specialist. The tenor's *Il mio tesoro* from Don Giovanni inevitably bows to John McCormack's unforgettable record, but it holds its own in any other company you can name. The florid measures are admirably achieved.

Dalla sua pace from Don Giovanni, and the portrait aria from *The Magic Flute* both serve to display this singer's fine, flowing legato, and the romantic

quality of his voice.

Mr. Anders, born in Germany in 1908, is still an operatic luminary in Europe, and is considered one of the best lyric tenors now singing at the famous Munich opera house.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Verdi: Highlights from "La Traviata." Licia Albanese (soprano), Jan Peerce (tenor), Robert Merrill (baritone) with the RCA Victor Orchestra. 5-12" discs in album (V-DM-1473) \$7.59. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1473) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1115) \$5.72.

Verdi Commemorative Album. Licia Albanese, Erna Berger, Zinka Milanov (sopranos); Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano); Jussi Bjoerling, Jan Peerce, Giuseppe di Stefano (tenors); Robert Merrill, Leonard Warren (baritones); Italo Tajo (basso); with the RCA Victor Orchestra. 5-12" discs in album (V-DM-1474) \$7.59. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1474) \$6.29.

The 50th anniversary of Verdi's death could not pass without some fitting tribute to this great composer's memory. RCA Victor has released two recordings that do a good deal to honor that memory.

The Commemorative Album offers selections from most of the well-known operas—*Solenne in quest' ora* and *Pace, pace, mio dio* from "La Forza del Destino"; *Credo in un dio crudel* from "Otello"; *Bella figlia dell' amore* (quartet) and *Questa o quella* from "Rigoletto"; *Eri tu?* from "Un Ballo in Maschera"; *Libiamo, libiamo ne' lieti calici* and *De' miei bollenti spiriti* from "La Traviata"; and *Dormiro sol nel manto mio regal* from "Don Carlos."

The album of "Traviata" highlights presents the principal arias: *Libiamo, libiamo ne' lieti calici*; *Un di felice, eterea*; *Ah! fors' e lui*; *Sempre libera*; *De' miei bollenti spiriti*; *Ah! dite alla giovine*; *Imponete*; *Di provenza il mar*; *Addio del passato*; and *Parigi, o cara, noi lasceremo*.

In these two albums, some of our most famous artists have contributed their finest. Either, or both, will give hours of drama and pleasure.

Mozart: Bastien und Bastienne, K. 50 (complete). (Sung in German). Käthe Nentwig (soprano); Hetty Plümacher (alto); Gustav Neidlinger (basso); with the Tonstudio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. Three sides, and **Mozart: Divertimento in C, K. 187** and **Mozart: Divertimento in C, K. 188.** Salzburg Wind Ensemble conducted by Meinhard von Zallinger. 2-12" discs in album (*PERIOD-SPLP-520) \$12.55.

Mozart's little Singspiel "Bastien und Bastienne" derives, insofar as plot and style are concerned, from Rousseau's *Le Devin du Village*. It is noteworthy for at least three reasons: Mozart wrote it at the age of twelve (!), it is the first of his trio of unparalleled German language operas and, in it he anticipates the main theme of the first movement of Beethoven's *Eroica*.

* Indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø Indicates 45 rpm.

As recorded by Period Records, *Bastien und Bastienne* is an unalloyed delight. The soloists are excellent (especially Herr Neidlinger) and, what is highly important in *Singspiel*, all three artists read their lines intelligently and intelligibly. The performance is uncut and superbly directed by Rolf Reinhardt. There are no reservations concerning this set; it is an artistic and musicianly job from the opening notes of the delightful overture to the final bars.

The problem of the odd side is magnified many times with LP. Even on 78 rpm discs, many companies jumped between the horns of the dilemma and left them blank. This is not feasible with LP's but Period, in this instance, has made a very happy choice by recording two *Divertimenti* (K. 187 & 188) under the direction of Meinhard von Zallinger (who will be remembered for his inspired direction in the Haydn Society recording of *Idomeneo*). These works, scored for trumpets, flutes and tympani, are suitable companion pieces for the opera from all angles, including the chronological, and add much to the charm of the set.

Period's recording is superb; the surfaces, with the possible exception of side 2 (which is noisy) are quiet. A fine German-English libretto is included.

W.

Strauss: Die Fledermaus (complete operetta). (Sung in English). Lily Pons, Ljuba Welitch (sopranos); Martha Lipton (mezzo-soprano); Richard Tucker, Charles Kullman (tenors); John Brownlee (baritone); with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 12-12" discs in album (C-MOP-32) \$17.80. 2-12" discs in folder (*C-SL-108) \$11.90.

NOTE: This set was received too late for review this month. A review of it will appear in our April issue.

VOCAL



Wolf: Song Recital. Alfred Poell (basso) accompanied by Franz Holletschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-50-48) \$5.95.

Wolf: Song Recital. Elisabeth Schumann (soprano) accompanied by George Reeves (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-98) \$5.45.

German Lieder. Karl Schmitt-Walter (baritone) with accompaniments by Franz Rupp and Ferdinand Leitner (pianos). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8123) \$4.98.

Lovers of German *lieder* have a veritable feast in these three LP discs. Two are devoted entirely to the songs of Hugo Wolf, while the third contains songs by Schubert and Brahms in addition to Wolf.

The Westminster record serves to introduce Alfred Poell as a *lieder* singer. Herr Poell is an extremely able and polished artist. In fact, he is quite the best singer in this specialized field since the palmy days of Gerhard Hüsch. There are fourteen *lieder* in his re-

cital all of them being sung artistically and with consummate ease. The majority are songs based on poems by Morike, but for variety there are several from the *Italiensches Liederbuch* and two by Goethe. A pamphlet giving the text of the songs with English translations has been included.

Not to be outdone, Allegro presents the world famous soprano Elisabeth Schumann in sixteen *Wolf lieder*. The selection here ranges from the *Spanisches Liederbuch*, Goethe, Morike and the *Italienisches Liederbuch*. Mme. Schumann is a sterling artist, a circumstance that compensates, to some extent, for the fact that she is past her prime vocally. The songs are projected with the utmost clarity and with warmth of sentiment.

The Capitol disc contains six songs from *Die Winterreise* (Nos. 1, 4, 5, 11, 23 and 24), three by Brahms and three by Wolf. Kammersänger Karl Schmitt-Walter is thoroughly at home with this type of music and sings in all styles to perfection. It is a real pleasure to hear *lieder* sung in such an intelligent and authentic fashion. Herr Schmitt-Walter's voice is a rich baritone which he uses with assurance and proper feeling for the texts of the songs.

The recording on these three LP's ranges from magnificent for Westminster through fair for Allegro to mediocre for Capitol. The latter, being a "dubbed" job from Telefunken masters, is not too satisfactory but is, in all events, listenable. The surfaces in all cases are good.

W.

Schumann: Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42. (Sung in German). Uta Graf (soprano) accompanied by John Newmark (piano). 1-10" disc (*AL-AL-73) \$4.45.

Like the other romanticists of his era, Robert Schumann was a master of the song form. In fact, it may be said that his finest work was done in the smaller forms, of which *lieder* are most typical. The cycle *Frauenliebe und Leben* has been recorded many times before, notably by Lotte Lehmann (C-MM-529) and Helen Traubel (V-DM-737). There is also an old and now unobtainable Technicord set (T-5) by Isobelle French. None of the foregoing were entirely satisfactory, with Miss Lehmann getting the nod if only because of her greater experience.

The present LP disc, sung by Uta Graf, also leaves something to be desired. Miss Graf has a good voice, but one expects at least "good" voices on records. She sings well, her German is excellent and stylistically her approach is sound. What is lacking, however, is something that makes the difference between an ordinary performance and a memorable one—the extra something that great artists are able to project—call it personality, genius or what you will.

Eight songs comprise this cycle but no separating bands have been arranged so that the listener must fish around for an individual song. One would almost think it cost money to supply such a convenience! The piano tone in the recording is deplorable,

sounding like vintage 1930. Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben* is a popular work, and it is reasonable to assume that there will be other recordings forthcoming. Better wait. W.

Schütz: Vier kleine geistliche Konzerte (Four Little Sacred Concerti). One side, and **Schütz: Symphoniae Sacrae** (Nos. 1, 3, 6 and 7). Hugues Cuenod (tenor) with Members of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Daniel Pinkham. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-50-43) \$5.95.

Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672) has been called "the Father of German Music" and is the spiritual and musical predecessor of both Bach and Handel. His music had been neglected by record companies until the advent of LP, and it is a pleasure to report that such is no longer the case, this being the fourth disc devoted to his compositions.

The *Geistliche Konzerte* were written between 1636 and 1639 and are, as the name implies, "sacred concerti"—a form somewhat similar to the early *cantatas*. Four of these *Konzerte* are recorded here and, to use an adjective that is overworked, they are of absorbing interest. First hearings of such unfamiliar music are seldom conclusive, and one can assure the reader that subsequent hearings reveal depths and intensities that are nothing short of amazing. Schütz was a profound man, a great thinker and a consummate musician. The four *Symphoniae Sacrae* recorded on the reverse of this disc, date from 1629-30 and show the influence of the great Italian master, Claudio Monteverdi, whom Schütz made a point of visiting on his trip to Venice. There is a greater emotional depth in these works; an expressiveness heretofore not found in German music.

Hugues Cuenod, who makes a specialty of Renaissance and Baroque music, sings these compositions with considerable feeling and purity of tone. It is apparent that Messrs. Cuenod and Pinkham revel in such music and their obvious joy in their task is communicated to the listener. Westminster's recording is something to marvel at—the small instrumental ensemble (picked from the Vienna Symphony Orchestra) is reproduced in astonishing fashion. The surfaces are smooth and the whole undertaking shows care, musicianship and technical ability far above the average. A must for students and lovers of Baroque music—highly recommended for all music lovers.

W.

Song Recital. Elena Nikolaidi (contralto) accompanied by Jan Behr (piano). One side, and **Operatic Arias.** Elena Nikolaidi (contralto) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2165) \$4.

Those of our readers who evinced interest in future releases of Elena Nikolaidi's, after hearing the first discs made available domestically, will have a treat in store for them on this LP disc. It not only includes those first releases—*O don fatale* from Verdi's "Don Carlos"; *Una macchia e qui tottora* from Verdi's

"Macbeth"; and *Bel raggio lusinghier* from Rossini's "Semiramide"—which were reviewed in our January 1950 issue, but also presents Miss Nikolaidi in a *lieder* recital. Her rich contralto is heard in such standard items as Schubert's *Der Erlkönig* and Haydn's *Schäferlied*; lesser-known works—Mozart's *Der Sylfe des Friedens*; Schumann's *Mondnacht*; and Brahms' *Alte Liebe*—round out her varied program.

Beloved Hymns. Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Conrad Forsberg (organ). 3-10" discs in album (V-DM-1484) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1484) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-58) \$4.67.

Miss Thebom has chosen a group of gospel hymns most of which were made famous on records many years ago by Homer Rodeheaver, Billy Sunday's famous singer and trombonist. Miss Thebom's renditions lack the fiery enthusiasm of the "sawdust trail," and thus those who are interested in such hymns will probably think them pretty tame.

The present recordings were made in the Fourth Presbyterian Church of New York, with Conrad Forsberg at the organ. RCA Victor was not too successful in recording the organ of that famous old church, although Miss Thebom's voice comes through very nicely.

The selections are: *The Old Rugged Cross*; *I Walk With the King*; *Shall We Gather at the River?*; *Give Me That Old Time Religion*; *Softly and Tenderly*; *In the Garden*; and *Open My Eyes, That I might See*. For those who would like to join Miss Thebom in singing these old favorites the text of each hymn is supplied.

American Songs. Margaret Truman (soprano) with the Robert Shaw Chorale and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 4-10" discs in album (V-DM-1445) \$6.29. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1445) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-57) \$4.67.

The President's daughter has selected for her first recording a group of songs from the colonial period of her country. The songs themselves are very interesting and they are fully covered in the copious notes supplied by the distinguished musicologist, Sigmund Spaeth. As we do not wish to add anything one way or the other to the controversy as to the quality of Miss Truman's voice or her ability as a vocalist, we will content ourselves with simply listing her first recording. The publicity that will be given it insures that it will be on the shelves of every dealer in the country, and thus those interested should have no difficulty in hearing it if they wish.

Rodgers: Pal Joey. Vivienne Segal, Harold Lang and Barbara Ashley with Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 7-10" discs in album (CMM-974) \$8.80. 7-7" discs in box (øC-A-974) \$8.55. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54364) \$5.45.

Nearly a decade after its great success on Broadway, *Pal Joey* makes its debut on records. This musical,

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

one of the first to depart from the "formula" variety, was based on the life and times of "Pal Joey," a dancer created by John O'Hara in *The New Yorker*. Richard Rodgers, who personally supervised the entire production on these discs, personally vouches for the authenticity of the re-creation of this by-gone success. Readers may be surprised to recognize the tunes *Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered* and *I Could Write a Book*, popular hits of today, as having originated from this show.

A. Scarlatti: Motetto da Requiem. One side, and **Porpora: Salve Regina.** (Sung in Italian). Yves Tinayre (baritone) with Edward Linzel (organ) and the Allegro Chamber Society conducted by Sam Morgenstern. 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-87) \$5.45.

Allegro Records are rapidly surging to the fore as purveyors of records for the connoisseur. Recently, in addition to their carefully chosen repertoire, they have come up with some magnificent recording.

Two old Italian Masters are represented on this disc. Alessandro Scarlatti (1659-1725) the famous father of famous sons has been neglected by recording companies and it is good to have the *Motetto da Requiem* on an LP disc. It is in typical Neopolitan form, as might well be expected, and is dark, sombre and austere in nature as befits a lament, an intercession for the souls in purgatory.

Nicolo Porpora (1686-1766) was one of those fantastic musicians of the 17th and 18th centuries who traveled far and wide teaching, studying and composing. His chief claim to fame is as a *maestro di canto*, Grove's stating flatly that "he was the greatest singing teacher that ever lived." This may be so, but now he must be judged solely on the basis of his numerous musical compositions. The work at hand, *Salve Regina*, is a tender, moving song of praise, and offers an excellent contrast to the music on the over side.

Yves Tinayre, the eminent French musicologist and baritone, edited both works and sings them with style and assurance. It is, therefore, a great pity (though not too surprising, considering that M. Tinayre will be sixty years old this year) that his voice is not a particularly musical one. Its quality is inclined to be harsh and rather "white." This is compensated for, to a great extent, by the care with which the music has been prepared and the artists' sympathy with the era in which it was written.

The recording is excellent with surfaces to match. It is an interesting disc, worthy of investigation by all serious music lovers.

Songs of Mendelssohn and Franz. Elisabeth Schumann (soprano) accompanied by George Schick (piano). 1-10" disc (*AL-AL-51) \$4.45.

Elisabeth Schumann gives a charming little *lieder* recital on this LP disc consisting of songs by Mendelssohn and Robert Franz (1815-1892). The Mendelssohn songs are: *Das erste Veilchen*; *Die liebende Schreiber*; *Bei den Wiege*; *Der Mond*; and *Frühlingslied*. The Franz selections are: *Aus meinem grossen*

Schmerzen; *Vöglein wohin?*; *Stille Sicherheit*; *Bitte*; *Liebchen ist da*; *Mutter o sing mich zur Ruh*; *Gute Nacht*; and *Widmung*.

Romberg: New Moon (excerpts). Eleanor Steber (soprano) and Nelson Eddy (baritone) with Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Leon Arnaud. 4-10" discs in album (C-MM-975) \$5.35. 1-10" disc (*CML-2164) \$4.

Miss Steber and Mr. Eddy sing the hits from Romberg's tuneful operetta *New Moon* in nice style. The selections are: *Stouthearted Men*; *Marianne*; *The Girl on the Prow*; *Wanting You*; *One Kiss*; *Gorgeous Alexander*; *Softly as in a Morning Sunrise*; and *Lover Come Back to Me*.

ORGAN

Bach: Die Kunst der Fuge (excerpts). Fritz Heitman (organ). 2-10" discs (*CL-L-8121/22) \$7.96.

Bach: Trio Sonata No. 1 in E-flat. One side, and **Bach: Trio Sonata No. 4 in E minor.** Robert Noehren (organ). 1-10" disc (*AL-AL-66) \$4.45.

Bach: Trio Sonata No. 3 in D minor. One side, and **Bach: Trio Sonata No. 6 in G.** Robert Noehren (organ). 1-10" disc (*AL-AL-71) \$4.45.

The Art of Fugue as performed by Fritz Heitmann in this recording is by far a more palatable dish for most of us than any previous versions. Heitmann states that he has taken due regard not to overtax the receptivity of the listener in comprehending such a long and difficult composition. For this reason, instead of the complete set of nineteen fugues and canons, only twelve have been chosen for recording. They represent characteristic examples of all the types of fugue employed in this last and profound masterpiece. The arrangement and order of the counterpoints here are in accordance with the requirement for an organ performance which will be at once coherent in structure and at the same time give utmost satisfaction to the listening ear through its variety of contrasting masses and tonal color. Using the organ in the Crypt of the Berlin Cathedral, Heitmann has achieved his purpose notably. Anyone previously on the borderline of adding this great work to his collection will be quickly swayed to this version. It is played with beautiful style and artistry, entirely proper and in keeping with the music, but in a highly interesting manner as regards the listening public. Our heartiest congratulations to Heitmann for this splendid achievement. The reproduction is very good too (Telefunken).

The two *Trio Sonata* discs listed above complete the set of six, the first disc having already been reviewed in these columns. This is, for most folks, rather cerebral music; and unlike Heitmann, Mr. Noehren does nothing to make it more palatable. The unresonant sound of this severe instrument (a baroque type in Kenmore Presbyterian Church, Buffalo, N. Y.)

seems to pall after too long a listening period. Taken one at a time, one can appreciate the neat technique and solid approach of Noehren, admittedly a fine artist. We recommend these for hard-shelled purists only. S.

Bach: Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor. One side, and **Bach: Pastorale in F.** Ernest White (organ). 1-10" disc (*ME-MG-15032) \$3.85.

Brahms: (11) Chorale-Preludes, Op. 122. Ernest White (organ). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10070) \$4.85.

Outstanding among the current batch of organ releases, which is certainly imposing, is this pair by Ernest White. We would not hesitate to say these discs are the finest yet, surpassing any previous American releases and rivalling the best of European recordings of this noble instrument. Everything is praiseworthy, but we will begin our paeans with the composer. For the first time, the entire eleven chorale preludes of Brahms are available—and nothing in organ literature has been more sorely needed on discs. They stand among the most significant works in the organ literature, being not only telling examples of Brahms' craftsmanship, but also supremely beautiful pieces of music. They are about the most accessible music for the layman of any of the major organ works; some of the preludes can be grasped at first hearing, the others on the second or third—none are tough or obscure. Which is to say that no matter who you are or what your tastes, the chances are good that you will derive much listening pleasure from these jewels.

Next in line for praise is the organist, Ernest White, than whom there is none more admirable and distinguished in our land. We have been familiar with his work for many years and have never ceased admiring his taste, skill, and profound knowledge. You will be amazed at the warmth, color, and communicative power of White's playing. He plays these preludes with ample regard for their romantic texture, using at times the most gorgeous—nearly lush—registration. As for his Bach, the *Passacaglia* has never been better set forth on records, while the *Pastorale in F* is played with exquisite artistry.

The organ used is that in the church of St. Mary the Virgin, New York City, one of the finest instruments in this country. It is reproduced magnificently. We can recommend these discs without reservation, and urge anyone remotely interested not to pass up the opportunity to hear them. The Brahms belongs in every record collection. S.

Bach: Fantasy in C and Bach: Fantasy and Fugue in C minor. One side, and **Bach: Fantasy in C minor and Bach: Fantasy and Fugue in G minor ("The Great").** Andre Marchal (organ). 1-12" disc (*VX-DL-6730) \$5.95.

Available for the first time on a domestic label, we have an organ recording by the renowned organist Andre Marchal. Marchal is the blind organist who some years ago succeeded Joseph Bonnet at St.

Eustache in France, a post he has held with great distinction. He is recognized as one of the greatest among living organists and a year or so ago made a tour of this country which, from all accounts we have heard, was a resounding success. Vox has seen fit to print elaborate and worthwhile program notes about Bach and the music played on this disc, but they were surely in error by omitting at least one paragraph of biographical information concerning this great artist. They also failed to note anywhere, including the record label, what organ is used. It sounds like one of the major French cathedral instruments, possibly St. Eustache. Whatever it is, it is a magnificent organ and very well recorded. Marchal plays in the old world grand manner, and this disc is reminiscent of the old Vierne records available years ago on Decca and Columbia labels. His playing of the *Fantasies and Fugues* is crowned with inspiration that can be felt by the listener from the very first bar right through to the end. You can sit back and close your eyes and imagine yourself right in the church, with the feeling that you are participating in an event of importance, not merely listening to a record.

There is thought in the selection of these works, for they present contrasting examples of Bach's work at different periods, and reflect various influences of his life at each time. For most folks the most telling of these works is the *Fantasy and Fugue in G minor*, particularly the "Great" *G minor Fugue*. Marchal's conception of this work is set forth in such a manner as to dwarf other recordings of it. This disc is not to be missed by any collectors of organ music. S.

PIANO



Haydn: Sonata No. 1 in E-flat (B. & H. 52). One and one-half sides, and **Haydn: Sonata No. 7 in D (B. & H. 37).** Lili Kraus (piano). 1-10" disc (*VX-PLP-1740) \$4.75.

We are always delighted when a Lili Kraus record comes to the studio. It was no exception when this LP disc arrived. We certainly enjoyed many pleasant minutes under the spell of this great artist as we listened to her play these rather simple little Haydn sonatas so superbly.

Smetana: Polkas for Piano. Frantisek Maxián, Frantisek Rauch, Ludvík Kundera, Vladimír Polívka, Dana Setková and Jan Herman (pianists). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10004) \$4.85.

Smetana: Bohemian Dances. Frantisek Rauch, Frantisek Maxián, Jan Herman and Otakar Vondrovic (pianists). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10046) \$4.85.

The first of these discs contains a selected group of polkas from a large number that Smetana composed for the piano. They are from his early years and display a youthful touch—not too serious and, sometimes, toe-tickling although they were not meant for dancing.

The *Bohemian Dances* are a complete piano se-

quence of later composition and are of a more purposeful nature intending, as one may learn from the titles, to depict the composer's feeling for his homeland. Among the compositions listed are *The Little Hen*; *Oats*; *Stomp Dance*; *The Lancer*; and *Furiant*. These recordings have been transferred from Czech masters and the various pianists represented come through with better than average clarity of tone.

Schumann: Waldscenen, Op. 82 ("Forest Scenes"). Five sides, and **Schumann: Romance in F-sharp, Op. 28, No. 2**. Robert Casadesus (piano). 3-12" discs in album (C-MM-978) \$4.88.

Debussy: The Children's Corner Suite. Robert Casadesus (piano). 2-12" discs in album (CMX-355) \$3.57. Coupled with **Schumann: Waldscenen, Op. 82** ("Forest Scenes"). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4366) \$5.45.

As far as we have been able to determine, this is the first recording of Schumann's *Waldscenen* in its entirety. Most of our readers are probably familiar with *Vogel als Prophet* (The Prophet Bird), which is in the repertory of most concert pianists—especially for an encore. On hearing the complete suite of nine piano vignettes, one realizes that they all have the same romantic, descriptive quality that the aforementioned excerpt has, and when they are heard in sequence there seems to be a flowing, poetic mood that is not so apparent in hearing a single selection.

As for the *Children's Corner Suite*, always a favorite, it appears in its original piano form for the second time on a long-playing disc. The other version—Claude Debussy's own performance taken from piano rolls (*C-ML-4291)—while undoubtedly authentic, seems rather hurried compared to the smooth, charming performance given here by Robert Casadesus. His deft touch gives both albums a place in any piano enthusiast's collection. The Schumann *Romance in F-sharp* is not included in the LP version.

Brahms: Waltzes, Op. 39. One side, and **Chasins: Parade and Chasins: Period Suite**. Abram Chasins and Constance Keene (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10061) \$4.85.

Brahms: Three Rhapsodies. One side, and **Bach: Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue in D minor** and **Mozart: Fantasia in C minor, K. 475**. Abram Chasins (piano). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10062) \$4.85.

Mercury presents, with these two discs, enough of Johannes Brahms' piano music to make us cry "more!" The waltzes show Brahms' lighter side; the rhapsodies, a more serious facet. The rhapsodies included here are the *B minor*, Op. 79, No. 1; the *G minor*, Op. 79, No. 2; and the *E-flat*, Op. 119, No. 4. Mr. Chasins, whether playing alone or in the company of Miss Keene (really Mrs. Chasins), displays artistry and finesse. While we do not consider his compositions *Parade* and *Period Suite* of the greatest magnitude, they are extremely easy to listen to. The Bach and Mozart works have been presented before,

and often, by other fine pianists. The question, in choosing among them, seems to be merely "what's on the other side?"

Stravinsky: Sonata for Piano (1924). One side, and **Stravinsky: Serenade en La (1926)**. Soulima Stravinsky (piano). 1-10" disc (*AL-AL-74) \$4.45.

Scarlatti: Twelve Sonatas (Vol. II). Soulima Stravinsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-84) \$5.45.

With these two discs, widely separated though their composers are by time and tonality, Allegro continues to give music lovers of varied tastes an opportunity to hear the gifted son of one of our foremost living composers. The two Stravinsky works are, according to a notation accompanying the disc, the first in a series which will eventually encompass all this composer's compositions for the piano. The second set of twelve sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti is a fitting companion to the first in the series (*AL-AL-21). All in all, these two discs not only bring to long-playing records seldom-heard music, but also show a splendid pianist at home in worlds three hundred years apart.

Waltzes from the Classics. First Piano Quartet. 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1477) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1477) \$3.99.

The First Piano Quartet's host of fans will doubtless be delighted with these sparkling recordings of these popular waltzes—tuneful music splendidly reproduced. The selections are: *Blue Danube*; *Waltz of the Flowers*; *Liebeslied* (Kreisler); Chopin's *Grande Valse Brillante*; Brahms' *Four Waltzes* (from Op. 39); and Gounod: *Waltzes* (from "Faust").

Debussy: Images (Books I and II). Claudio Arrau (piano). 4-12" discs in album (C-MM-971) \$6.19. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2162) \$4.

This superb little LP disc is a very valuable addition to the long-playing repertory of recorded music. It contains the six selections that make up Debussy's *Images* (Books I and II). Arrau is an ideal artist for the interpretation of this mystical music. The piano reproduction is of the best.

VIOLIN



Paganini: Caprices, Op. 1, Nos. 1 to 12. Ruggiero Ricci (violin). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-264) \$5.95.

Paganini: Caprices, Op. 1, Nos. 1, 5, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21 and 24. Michael Rabin (violin). 3-12" discs in album (C-MM-979) \$4.88. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2168) \$4.

This pair of LP discs contain recordings by two "boy wonders." The first, Ruggiero Ricci, who, though but thirty years of age, has been before the public for twenty years; and the second, the fourteen-year-old Michael Rabin, who gave his first Carnegie Hall recital last November.

Ricci has made many recordings and his fame is so well-known that it is only necessary to state that

he plays these Paganini Caprices with his usual brilliance and technical proficiency.

As this is Master Rabin's recording debut, a word or two about this young man is in order. He is the son of a member of the violin section of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony and is a pupil of Ivan Galamian at the Juilliard School of Music. His Carnegie Hall debut was a great triumph, and as he received rave notices from most of the critics, there have been numerous calls for recordings by this remarkable young artist. It would seem that there is a waiting market for this his first record.

Bennett: A Song Sonata. Louis Kaufman (violin) and Theodore Saidenberg (piano). One side, and **Delius: Sonata No. 1 for Violin & Piano.** (TNR Jan. '49). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1062) \$5.95.

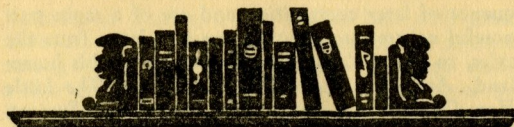
A *Song Sonata* by the American arranger, conductor and composer, Robert Russell Bennett, was, according to the composer, written for his own pleasure and "to" several of his closest friends who often gather together to play chamber music. Mr. Bennett has stated that the word "friendly" best describes his rather unusual opus. The music is in five sections which are marked as follows: "Quiet and philosophic"; "Same tempo, but belligerent"; "Slowly and lonely"; "Madly dancing" and "Gracefully strolling." It is probably great fun to play this music—Kaufman and Saidenberg seem to be enjoying themselves immensely. It would seem to us that it is just possible that the players will enjoy this work more than the listeners. We only had an opportunity of hearing it twice and so have come to no definite opinion, but we must say that our impression so far is that it did not begin anywhere and ended without having accomplished anything of particular interest.

MISCELLANEOUS



Sor: Grand Sonata, Op. 22. One side, and **Sor: Introduction, Theme, and Variations on a theme from "Die Zauberflöte"** and **Sor: Minuet in D** and **Sor: Minuet in A** and **Sor: Etudes in B minor, B-flat & A.** Rey de la Torre (guitar). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-76) \$5.45.

Fernando Sor (1778-1839) was a noted Spanish guitarist and a prolific composer for his instrument. On the present LP disc a recital made up entirely of his music is given by the very able Cuban guitarist, Rey de la Torre. Mr. Torre is quite well-known in this country because of his many recitals given both over the air and on the concert platform. He has quite a following among those interested in his instrument and because of this we rather expect that the present record will enjoy a reasonably wide acceptance. We are pleased to report that the reproduction and the record surfaces are of the highest quality.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, AL—Allegro, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Consert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DG—Deutsche Grammophon, DI—Disc, GIOA—Griegian Inst. of America, HS—Haydn Society, HW—Hargall, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, T—Telefunken, V—Victor, VX—Vox, WEST—Westminster, and W—Woodwind.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 † indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 2

APRIL, 1951

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

THE number of new releases seems to be somewhat leveling off and thus it should not be too long until we catch up with the recordings that are awaiting their turn for notice in our columns. In an earnest effort to bring ourselves up-to-date, we will omit any further general remarks and turn our attention to reviews of the new recordings.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33⅓ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

X Gluck: *Alceste*—Overture. One side, and Beethoven: *Quartet No. 13, Op 130*—Cavatina. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra—Furtwängler. 1-10" disc (*CL-H-8130) \$2.98. (TNR May '49).

Shostakovich: *Quartet No. 3*. Fine Arts Quartet. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10049) \$4.85. (TNR Oct. '48).

Beethoven: *Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37*. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with NBC Symphony Orchestra—Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1009) \$5.72. (TNR Dec. '45).

Brahms: *Concerto in A minor, Op. 102*. Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Feuermann (violoncello) with Philadelphia Orchestra—Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1016) \$5.72. (TNR Oct. '41).

Beethoven: *Trio No. 7 in B-flat, Op. 97* ("Archduke"). Artur Rubinstein (piano), Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Feuermann (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1020) \$5.72. (TNR Oct. '43).

Beethoven: *Concerto No. 5 in E-flat, Op 73* ("Emperor"). Artur Schnabel (piano) with Chicago Symphony Orchestra—Stock. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1015) \$5.72. (TNR May '43).

Rachmaninoff: *Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18*. Sergei Rachmaninoff (piano) with Philadelphia Orchestra—Stokowski. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1014) \$5.72. (Orig. issued Sept. '29).

Rachmaninoff: *Concerto No. 4 in G minor, Op. 40*. Sergei Rachmaninoff (piano) with Philadelphia Orchestra—Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1019) \$5.72. (TNR Oct. '44).

Tchaikovsky: *Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op 23*. Vladimir Horowitz (piano) with NBC Symphony Orchestra—Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1012) \$5.72. (TNR Nov. '41).

Beethoven: *Concerto in D, Op. 61*. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with NBC Symphony Orchestra—Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1010) \$5.72. (TNR Nov. '40).

Prokofiev: *Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 63*. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with Boston Symphony Orchestra—Koussevitzky. 1-10" disc (*V-LCT-6) \$4.67. (TNR July '38).

Mozart: *Divertimento in E-flat, K. 563*. Jascha Heifetz (violin), William Primrose (viola) and Emanuel Feuermann (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1021) \$5.72. (TNR Mar. '44).

Shakespeare: *Hamlet* (excerpts). Laurence Olivier and supporting cast. 1-10" disc (*V-LCT-5) \$4.67. (TNR Nov. '48).

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 7 in A, Op. 92*. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra—Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1013) \$5.72. (TNR Oct. '36).

Haydn: *Symphony No. 88 in G (B. & H. No. 13)*. NBC Symphony Orchestra—Toscanini. 1-10" disc (*V-LCT-7) \$4.67. (TNR Aug. '38).

Brahms: *Trio No. 1 in B, Op 8*. Artur Rubinstein (piano), Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Feuermann (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1022) \$5.72. (TNR May '42).

Schubert: *Trio No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 99*. Artur Rubinstein (piano), Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Feuermann (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1017) \$5.72. (TNR Nov. '42).

ORCHESTRA



Rossini—arr. Respighi: *La Boutique Fantasque* (The Fantastic Toyshop). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 3-12" discs in album (C-MM-981) \$4.88. Coupled with **Schumann: Carnaval**. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54367) \$5.45.

Schumann—arr. Glazounov: *Carnaval*. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 3-12" discs in album (C-MM-982) \$4.88. Coupled with **Rossini**—arr. Respighi: *La Boutique Fantasque*. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54367) \$5.45.

Rossini—arr. Respighi: *La Boutique Fantasque* (The Fantastic Toyshop). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-274) \$5.95.

Here is a fascinating study in the difference a conductor can make. When Stokowski is in a lush and expansive and capricious mood doing the Brahms *First* compared to Toscanini in a highly disciplined mood, the comparisons are too obvious. But when an acknowledged authority of ballet music like Kurtz is pitted against a superb colorist like Ansermet, the comparison is one composed of many subtleties. Each of these men handles *Boutique Fantasque* in a way that is excellent, and each version by itself is great. But the differences are there, and a choice is difficult. We will judge these performances as recordings, which makes them concert performances (in our living room) and not actual ballet performances in a theatre. On that basis we must choose Ansermet, for his gentle, knowing hand is evident in the plastic, carefully shaded reading he bestows on this music. Ansermet's mastery is also to the fore in making the London Symphony sound like a greater orchestra than the Royal Philharmonic.

As for the reproduction, that is a story in itself. We will go on record as saying the London *Boutique Fantasque* is the finest reproduction yet offered to the public on records. We suspected that this disc was appreciably better than the average fine LP disc for reproduction, and after talking it over with an FM station engineer we are happy to report that he too has found this disc the best ever issued. It is not so much a matter of range as it is of quality, for the orchestra sounds like an orchestra—superb in every respect, full, rich, good perspective, silky strings, good pianissimos, round tuttis, just everything you want in orchestral reproduction. And it sounds just as lovely (comparatively speaking) on a small portable machine as on a large high fidelity job; we've tried it on both.

Columbia's reproduction is thoroughly excellent on both sides. The Schumann *Carnaval* in Glazounov's orchestration is an ideal companion to the *Boutique*, the pair making this disc doubly attractive. The London *Boutique* is complete except for a few cuts of linking passages; Columbia's is trimmed a bit, but essentially complete permitting it to fit on one 12"

LP side. The other side is, of course, delightful too, making Columbia's disc, without question the best buy economically, and with its high quality, not a bad buy any way you look at it. If you can indulge yourself, do it on the London disc; otherwise take Columbia—you're bound to enjoy either many times over. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 3 in D. Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Hoogstraten. One side, and **Schubert: Quartet No. 12 in C minor** ("Quartetsatz"). Barchet String Quartet: Reinhold Barchet and Franz Huepfner (violins); Heinz Kirchner (viola); Siegfried Barchet (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-517) \$5.95.

Schubert: Symphony No. 4 in C minor ("Tragic"). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Sacher. 1-12" disc (*PROGRAM-EXLP-704) \$5.95.

Schubert: Symphony No. 6 in C. Bavarian Radio Orchestra conducted by Alfons Dressel. 1-10" disc (*ME-MG-15003) \$3.85.

Symphonies No. 3 and No. 6 are available for the first time on LP in these editions only, and we are pleased to say that they are more than satisfactory. The readings, in both cases, are vital and lively and the reproduction is likewise. As the music is also gay and rather unpretentious in both these works, everything concerned with these discs lends itself to some easy and pleasurable listening. The reverse side of the *Third Symphony* is devoted to a string quartet performance of an infrequently performed work, the *Quartetsatz in C minor*, excellently played and recorded. Properly it is the twelfth quartet, bearing a posthumous opus, even though it is but a single movement. Schubert apparently had plans to finish it, for there are an existent few bars of a second movement. As it stands, it is a brief masterpiece. Its brevity, by the way, has been spread by wide grooving over a whole 12" side—looks like a lot, but lasts only about ten minutes. However, the *Third Symphony* is uninterrupted on one 12" side—a blessing.

The "Tragic" *Symphony No. 4* has never been our cup of tea, and this recording does nothing to win us over. It is on the dullish side as reproduction, as interpretation, and if we may be pardoned, as music also. It also had a wavery, wowing, quality which was annoying, although our disc was not pressed off center. Something just didn't strike us as right with this disc, and we do not recommend it. If you must tragedize, try Klemperer's reading on *VX-PL-6800—he at least tightens up the score. S.

Milhaud: Symphonies for Small Orchestra (Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 5). Concert Hall Society Chamber Orchestra conducted by Darius Milhaud. One side, and **Janáček: Concertino for Piano, Strings and Wind Instruments**. Rudolf Firkusny (piano) and ensemble. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1076) \$5.95.

Between 1917 and 1922, Milhaud wrote five tiny symphonies for small orchestra. Four of them are

recorded on the present disc under the direction of the composer. In these little works Milhaud attempts to imitate the brevity and formal simplicity of the early symphonies but maintains the method of the present day in that they are made up of several movements. Each symphony consists of three very short sections—each section represents a different mood. We found them highly interesting and recommend them to those daring souls who like to strike out into new fields in the realm of musical composition.

Leos Janáček (1854-1928), a most important modern Czech composer, is practically unknown in this country. Probably the first American recording of any of his works is the one listed above which was originally released by Concert Hall in its "Limited Edition" series a couple of years ago. On the present disc it is now generally available. The group of artists who made this recording are the same as the ensemble who first brought this work to the attention of the American public at a concert of the New Friends of Music during the 1946-47 season in New York. Rudolf Firkusny was a student of Janáček's and is considered an authority on the music of his former master; thus we should have a highly authentic performance. This is not a composition to be fully grasped at the first hearing; however, it is immediately sufficiently interesting to entice the adventuresome to investigate it more fully. We found it thoroughly rewarding.

R.

Gillis: Symphony No. 5½ (A Symphony for Fun).

One side, and **Gillis: The Alamo.** The New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Don Gillis. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-177) \$4.95.

Gillis: Symphony No. 7 (Saga of a Prairie School).

The New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Don Gillis. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-175) \$4.95.

Gillis: The Man Who Invented Music. Jack Kilty (narrator) with The New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Don Gillis. One side, and **Gillis: Portrait of a Frontier Town.** The New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Don Gillis. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-176) \$5.95.

For a composer whose output borders on the prolific, Don Gillis has not had much in the way of representation on records. That lack has, with the issuance of the three discs listed above, been remedied. Mr. Gillis, while not a composer of profound music, has humor and charm in his writing. This is especially evident in such works as *Symphony No. 5½* (so-called because he wrote it between the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies) and *The Man Who Invented Music*. This latter composition, although not as original a work as *Peter and the Wolf* (Prokofiev), has novelty and tunefulness and a definite appeal for children. Another side of Mr. Gillis is shown in his skillful use of folk songs, together with melodies of his own, in such regional works as *The Alamo*, *Portrait of a Frontier Town*, and *Symphony No. 7* (which bears

the subtitle "Saga of a Prairie School"). These compositions are characterized by liveliness, such as we associate with music about the West, coupled with contrasting serenity, evocative of vast, lonely stretches of plainland.

We believe that Don Gillis has provided enough refreshing music here to warrant investigation by those seeking new musical frontiers.

Handel—arr. Beecham: The Faithful Shepherd—Suite. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album (C-MM-990). \$4.88. Coupled with **Haydn: Symphony No. 93 in D.** 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54374) \$5.45.

Haydn: Symphony No. 93 in D. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album (C-MM-991) \$4.88. Coupled with **Handel—arr. Beecham: The Faithful Shepherd.** 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54374) \$5.45.

With Sir Thomas' help we are transported back to the Eighteenth Century where life was serener, if less sanitary. *The Faithful Shepherd* has not survived as an opera but Beecham's arrangement in the form of a suite has gained great favor wherever played. Since the mood of the opera was pastoral, a good deal of the orchestral version is made up of graceful dances and melodies of utmost simplicity.

Symphony No. 93 is Haydn at his best. Here is combined exuberance, lyricism and general well-being. The movements are clearly marked and each becomes a gem in a larger setting. The Royal Philharmonic under Sir Thomas Beecham has made a generous contribution, beautifully played, to our musical enjoyment.

Mozart: Symphony No. 32 in G, K. 318. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans von Benda. One side, and **Wolf: Italian Serenade.** German Philharmonic Orchestra (Prague) conducted by Joseph Keilberth. 1-10" disc (*CL-H-8131) \$2.98.

Capitol-Telefunken presents here a new departure in the manufacture of LP's. Two compositions that would comprise one 12-inch 78 rpm disc each, have been placed on one 10-inch 33⅓ rpm disc so that they may be heard uninterrupted. The unusual feature is that, since there is less music than is ordinarily placed on an LP, the price has been considerably reduced in this particular series. Mozart's brief *Symphony No. 32* and Wolf's *Italian Serenade* make ideal companions, although a century separates them. Performance and recording are uniformly good.

Mendelssohn: The Hebrides—Overture ("Fingal's Cave"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6941) \$1.84.

In view of the fact that there is a great interest in both the Vienna Philharmonic and Furtwängler, it seems worth while to advise our readers that the record listed above is presently available in this country. Copies of it were received in a recent shipment from abroad.

Bach: Cantata No. 208 ("Birthday")—Sheep may safely graze. One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 147**—Jesu, joy of man's desiring. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-12-3159) \$1.31 1-7" disc (øV-49-3159) \$1.16.

Any of our readers who consider Bach a composer only to be enjoyed in a "cerebral" fashion, should listen to the compositions presented on this disc by Leopold Stokowski. World-famous for his Bach transcriptions, he has done more to "humanize" that great composer's work than any other musician of our day.

Kabalevsky: Colas Breugnon, Op. 24—Overture. One side, and **Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream, Op. 61, No. 1—Scherzo.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (V-12-3156) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3156) \$1.16.

Arturo Toscanini here favors us with the most popular of the shorter works played on his nationwide tour of last year. Both numbers are played with verve, and the reproduction is excellent.

CONCERTO



Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 3 in D minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 30. Witold Malcuzyński (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54369) \$5.45.

It is always a pleasure for us to write of the Rachmaninoff *Third Concerto*, although the occasion occurs too infrequently. This is our favorite Rachmaninoff concerto and one of our favorites by any composer. It has more expressive themes and the work hangs together better than his others. There is thematic unity and mastery of structure. The first movement holds endless fascination because of its subtlety, which however does not fail to build to a couple of sonorous climaxes. The second movement is lyric beauty all the way, while the finale is restless, brilliant, and exciting with an impressive climax. One cannot mistake Rachmaninoff in every bar; it is characteristically he, and it is he at his best. This work deserves every bit of the popularity achieved by his *Second Concerto* and then some.

At the moment this recording is without competition on LP discs, it being the first to be issued. Victor has just released the Rachmaninoff *Second* and *Fourth* concertos played by the composer himself, with the Philadelphia Orchestra. There is every reason to hope they will follow along with the *Third* in the near future, as they expand their Treasury Series. The recording he made of the *Third* is supremely great, and it is clearly the tops and would be no matter who else tackled it. Rachmaninoff was his own greatest interpreter, and when he had the Philadelphia Orchestra with him, he was in his greatest form.

Malcuzyński performs this work as beautifully as we have ever heard it done by anyone except Rach-

maninoff. His technique is known to be mighty fine, and his feeling for the work is obvious. At the risk of being overly sentimental he stays on the conservative side, but is not too unbending or stuffy. Kletzki and the Philharmonia offer capable accompaniment; the British reproduction is characteristically meaty and round in tone. Our recommendation is to wait for Victor to issue the Rachmaninoff version; and if they don't, this is a most acceptable second choice. S.

Mendelssohn: Concerto No. 2 in D minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 40. Friedrich Wuehrer (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Songs Without Words—selections.** Emanuelina Pizzuto (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6570) \$5.95.

We remember reading an interview held with an official of the Vox Recording Studio not so long ago. The gentleman said that Vox has endeavored to have artists record particular selections for which they are well suited. This recording, we feel, is a good case in point. Friedrich Wuehrer has caught a spirit of Mendelssohn in this concerto that well nigh blots out memories of past performances we have heard. The Vienna Symphony Orchestra has matched Mr. Wuehrer's performance, and a happier combination of warmth and sympathetic interpretation would be hard to find.

As is almost always the case in Mendelssohn concerti, the second movement is the highlight, comparable to his melodious songs without words. We welcome this addition to our Mendelssohn library.

Mendelssohn wrote some forty-eight songs without words, and here we have a highly representative group. Emanuelina Pizzuto, the pianist, has given some careful thought to interpretation with which we can find no fault.

A slight printing error has occurred on the jacket of this album listing the first selection as Opus 53, No. 3. It is Opus 53, No. 5. D.

Beethoven: Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 61. Zino Francescatti (violin) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-12" discs in album (C-MM-985) \$7.50 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54371) \$5.45.

It may seem odd to some that Columbia should issue a new recording of the Beethoven *Violin Concerto*, with the excellent one by Szigeti still doing service in their catalog. Francescatti is steadily becoming one of the best-selling recording artists, and justly so, for he is consistently recognized as a peer among contemporary violinists. He has a rather unique blend of great poetry and warmth in his interpretations without being overly sentimental and distorted—all this coupled with a prodigious technique. In person, he has in addition a most pleasing and unassuming stage presence. This recording is played much as many of you may have heard him do it over the air or at local concerts. There is great nobility, in keeping with

the noble proportions of the work, and there is exceptional warmth and expressiveness which reveal all the deep feeling and lyricism of the music.

A most unusual feature of this performance is that it was made as if it were played in concert: each movement complete in itself, recorded as a whole with no re-takes—once through only. That alone is high praise for Francescatti as well as for the Philadelphia Orchestra, whose accompaniment is on the same high level of artistry as the soloist's. The reproduction is beautiful in perspective and range. The string tone, both solo and orchestral, is exceedingly lovely, and the soloist is not on top of the microphone for once. As a whole, this recording can easily be termed the most beautiful ever made of the work. Mr. Francescatti uses the Kreisler cadenzas.

The competition Francescatti encounters on LP discs includes, beside the aforementioned Szigeti version with Walter and the N. Y. Philharmonic, a forthright reading by Kulenkampf with good Berlin Philharmonic accompaniment. Victor has also just re-issued in its Treasury Series the Heifetz-Toscanini set of previously celebrated fame. Our recommendation for prospective purchasers is Francescatti for nearly everyone; some Beethovenians may prefer Szigeti and for very good reasons, while a few will take Heifetz for his personal artistry. S.

Prokofiev: Concerto No. 1 in D-flat for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 10. Andor Földes (piano) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by M. Martinon. One side, and **Prokofiev: Tales of the Old Grandmother, Op. 31.** And **Prokofiev: Four Pieces, Op. 32.** Andor Földes (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6590) \$5.95.

The *First Piano Concerto* is Prokofiev's first major work. He originally conceived it as a concertino; it is in one movement, along the lines of the Liszt concertos and symphonic poems. At its first performance in 1912 it created the usual furore. All of the conservative critics condemned it; the younger ones threw their hats in the air. It is easy to see where the concerto would ruffle a few feelings. It had something new in rhythm and a steel-like, polytonal clanging sound. We did not find it too hard to take, and rather enjoyed its drive. It is not without form; Prokofiev has called it "an allegro movement in sonata form." It starts in a bold manner with the orchestra snorting forth three emphatic chords, after which the piano outlines the main theme in striding octaves. The first section goes through several stages, concluding with a march-like theme that builds to an imposing climax. The succeeding *Andante assai* would correspond to the slow movement of a classic concerto, just as the *Allegro scherzando* which follows would be the finale. In this final section Prokofiev re-introduces material previously heard, in addition to some new material, and ends the concerto with a virtuosic blaze of octaves. This is an exuberant young man's concerto, full of strength, excitement and vigor, exultant in its ideas, moving confidently forward with

aplomb and momentum.

Tales of the Old Grandmother has no specific program. The four Tales are merely marked *Moderato*, *Andantino*, *Andante assai* and *Sostenuto*. They are simple, charming and relaxed, strongly Russian in feeling, with a broad melodic outline as close as Prokofiev ever came to sentimentality.

The *Four Pieces* are all based on dance forms: *Dance*, *Minuet*, *Gavotte* and *Waltz*. Here the writing is much more modern; clever twentieth-century translations of the old dances. Andor Földes again proves himself a first rank artist with a stunning reading of the concerto and technically excellent playing of the solo works. Good reproduction makes this a fine disc of fresh, and worthy, material. S.

Bach: Concerto No. 2 in C for Two Claviers and Orchestra. Hans Andrae and Theodor Sack (harpsichords) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Dahinden. One side, and **Haydn: Concerto in F for Violin and Harpsichord.** Peter Rybar (violin) and Hans Andrae (harpsichord) with the Concert Hall Chamber Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1081) \$5.95.

If it were not for such recordings as are contained on the present disc, music lovers would certainly not have an opportunity to study and enjoy such music. We often wonder if persons realize how much they are indebted to the art of recording for their present knowledge of musical literature, especially of the music of eras long since passed—music that very rarely is heard in the concert hall or over the air.

When we have such music so beautifully played in the tradition of its time as we have it on the present record, we have something that all discerning music lovers should cherish and welcome to their libraries.

J. C. F. Bach: Concerto for Harpsichord, Viola and Orchestra. Marquerite Roesgen-Champion (harpsichord) and Robert Boulay (viola) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Arthur Goldschmidt. One side, and **W. F. Bach: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in C minor.** Louise Thyron (piano) with the Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Ch. M. De Boncourt. And **W. F. Bach: Sonata in G—Lamento.** Louise Thyron (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PLP-6350) \$5.95.

This Vox LP disc contains several selections by sons of the great Johann Sebastian. These recordings were made by Polydor in Europe and have been very successfully transferred to the LP record listed above.

Janáček: Concertino for Piano, Strings and Wind Instruments. Rudolf Firkusny (piano) and ensemble. One side, and **Milhaud: Symphonies for Small Orchestra** (Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 5). Concert Hall Society Chamber-Orchestra conducted by Darius Milhaud. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1076) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Haydn: Die Sieben Worte des Erlösers am Kreuze ("The Seven Last Words of Christ"). Guilet String Quartet. Three sides, and **Beethoven: Elegischer Gesang, Op. 118**. (Sung in German.) Anita Robbins (soprano), Mildred Greenberg (contralto), Abram Sheer (tenor), Bert Spero (bass) and the Guilet String Quartet. 2-12" discs in folder (*CH-CHS-1084) \$11.90.

In 1785 the canon of the Cadiz Cathedral commissioned Haydn to write seven orchestra movements for use with the Good Friday service. These were to be used as musical interludes between the Bishop's discourses upon the Seven Last Words. Later Haydn arranged these for string quartet and for chorus and orchestra. It is the string quartet version that appears on this pair of discs.

At first it would seem that seven adagio movements would be most uninteresting as a quartet but the variety obtained by the composer in this form is surprising. However, we do not suggest that this work be heard at one sitting. It is recorded on three and one-half sides of these records and we rather feel that a relaxing pause of some length should be taken between the sides. If this suggestion is followed we are very sure that discerning lovers of chamber music will find that listening to *The Seven Last Words* is a thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding experience.

To fill the fourth side, and as a bonus of real value, Concert Hall has added a superb recording of Beethoven's unusual *Elegischer Gesang*—a work for four voices and string quartet. This simple but deeply moving opus dates from 1814 and was written in memory of the death of Baroness Pasqualati, the wife of one of Beethoven's friends and patrons.

We are glad to report that both of these works have been superbly performed by very able artists and that Concert Hall has achieved most faithful reproduction. Of especial value are the excellent notes that have been prepared by Richard Strunsky. These notes, which should add greatly to the enjoyment of the music, will be found on the inside leaves of the folder that contains this pair of discs.

Dvorák: Quartet No. 4 in C, Op. 61. Gordon String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1075) \$5.95.

The present Quartet does not rate in popularity with either Dvorák's No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 51 nor his No. 6 in F major, Op. 96 ("American"). The recording listed above, which was first released in Concert Hall's "Limited Edition" series a couple of years ago, is the first and only one that we know of. Some musicologists feel that in his *Opus 61* Dvorák leans too far in the direction of Beethoven and Brahms without having the genius of these two great masters. Fortunately or unfortunately this reviewer is not sufficiently erudite to let that stand in his way, and so he enjoyed the Gordon String Quartet's splendid performance very much. This is not a chamber work

of the first order, but it is tuneful; its many delightful and harmonious melodies are very pleasing to listen to.

Tchaikovsky: Trio in A minor, Op. 50. Artur Rubinstein (piano), Jascha Heifetz (violin), Gregor Piatigorsky (violin). 5-12" discs in album (V-DM-1488) \$7.59. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1488) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1120) \$5.72.

Mendelssohn: Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 49. Artur Rubinstein (piano), Jascha Heifetz (violin), Gregor Piatigorsky (violin). 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1487) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1487) \$3.99. Coupled with **Ravel: Trio in A minor, 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1119) \$5.72.**

Ravel: Trio in A minor. Artur Rubinstein (piano), Jascha Heifetz (violin), Gregor Piatigorsky (violin). 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1486) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1486) \$3.99. Coupled with **Mendelssohn: Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 49. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1119) \$5.72.**

Jascha Heifetz, Artur Rubinstein and Gregor Piatigorsky have combined their talents to present us with three trios of great interest, expertly performed.

The trios chosen provide contrast both in mood and instrumentation. The Tchaikovsky *Trio* gives prominence to the piano, although it does not dominate this romantically somber work. The violin has a large share in the sprightliness and generally light tone of Mendelssohn's *Trio No. 1 in D minor*. In Ravel's *Trio in A minor* the interplay of the instruments is more evenly divided, as is usually the case in modern chamber music.

Taken as a group, the above selections are more than welcome additions to recorded trio literature—hitherto a stepchild. If we were to choose one, it would be the LP disc containing both the Ravel and the Mendelssohn trio. Then we would have variety as well as superb playing.

R. Strauss: Quartet for Piano and Strings, Op. 13. Bernardo Segall (piano), José Figueroa (violin), Frank Brieff (viola), and George Ricci (violin). 1-12" disc (*NEW RECORDS-NRLP-201) \$5.75.

One of the newest recording companies to enter the LP field is New Records, Inc.—an organization, incidentally, which has nothing whatever to do with this publication.

Its initial presentations are, as far as we have been able to discover, appearing for the first time on discs. The item that we have under consideration here, Richard Strauss' *Piano Quartet*, is interesting as an early work of one of the foremost composers of the Twentieth Century. The influence of Brahms is strongly evident although this does no discredit to either musician; Strauss contributes enough of himself to presage the composer of the numerous tone poems and music dramas of later years. The work is well recorded and nicely played. We hope to hear more from New Records in the future.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

Loeillet: Sonata in F for Flute and Continuo and Loeillet: Sonata in G minor for Two Flutes and Continuo and Loeillet: Sonata for Flute, Oboe and Continuo. Phillip Kaplan and Lois Schaefer (flutes); John Holmes (oboe); Samuel Mayes (violin); and Erwin Bodky (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (*AL-AL-69) \$4.45.

There were three Flemish composers by the name of Loeillet (Jean, John and Jacques) who were writing music at the same time in the early part of the 18th century. All of them were also flutists and wrote chamber music that featured their instrument. It is easy to see how their compositions were confused and thus it is impossible to state definitely which Loeillet wrote the works that are performed so nicely on the present LP disc. They are typical of the music of the period and abound in pleasing melodies. They have been excellently recorded by Allegro.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in D, Op. 102, No. 2 and Beethoven (12) Variations in G on "Ein Weibchen" from Handel's "Judas Maccabeus" and Beethoven: (12) Variations on "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen" from Mozart's "Zauberflöte," Op. 66 and Beethoven: (7) Variations on "Bei Männern" from Mozart's "Zauberflöte." Gabor Rejto (violin) and Adolph Baller (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-75) \$5.45.

The present LP disc contains some of Beethoven's loveliest music for violin and piano—music that any discerning music lover can easily enjoy. It has been performed by two very fine artists and has been splendidly reproduced by Allegro.

OPERA

Montemezzi: L'Amore dei Tre Re (complete). (Sung in Italian). Clara Petrella, Gilda Capozzi (sopranos); Ebe Ticozzi (mezzo-soprano); Amedeo Berdini, Aldo Bertocci (tenors); Renato Capecchi (baritone); Sesto Bruscantini (basso); and Orchestra and Chorus of the Radio Italiana conducted by Arturo Basile. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1212) \$11.90.

In recording Montemezzi's *L'Amore dei Tre Re* Cetra has done a service that should put all opera lovers in its debt. Curiously neglected in the era of 78 rpm records (two single twelve inch sides were all that ever appeared in this country) this, the finest of modern Italian operas is now available in its entirety. At its world premiere (La Scala, 11 April 1913) it was a failure, and everyone was greatly surprised at its resounding success on 2 January 1914 at the Metropolitan.

The opera is a masterpiece both from a literary as well as a musical standpoint. There are those who feel that, in this case, the libretto is superior to the music, but this is mere snobbery. Certainly Benelli's play and libretto are excellent, but the music makes them live.

Top honors, vocally, go to Sesto Bruscantini for a magnificent portrayal of the blind, vengeful Archibaldo. Bruscantini's previous recordings did not prepare one for the powerful characterization he presents here, for his two other recorded performances were as a *basso buffo*. The role of the aged king is a very dramatic one, and in the thrilling finale to Act I Sgr. Bruscantini's muttering of the lines *Fa ch'io non veda . . . che sia cieco . . . cieco!* (Let me not see . . . let me be blind . . . blind!) will send shivers up and down your spine. Clara Petrella is excellently cast as the faithless Fiora. She sings with intelligence and passion and turns in a performance that is lustrous and real. The role of Avito is sung by Amedeo Berdini. Sgr. Berdini is, perhaps, the weakest member of the cast, but considering the superlative excellence of the others, he is still good. His role is one of those thankless operatic heroes (?); morally Avito is somewhat below Lt. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*. He does well throughout and rises nobly in the climaxes. Renato Capecchi, as Manfred, turns in a sound performance, singing with fervor and genuine musicianship. The orchestra and chorus of Radio Italiana under Arturo Basile play this score to the hilt, emphasizing its tragic and lyric beauty.

The recording is good, the surfaces quiet and the package (including an eminently readable libretto) tasteful. W.

Purcell: Timon of Athens—Masque. One side, and **Arne**—arr. Woodhouse: **Thomas and Sally**. (Sung in English). Soloists and instrumentalists of Intimate Opera. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-292) \$5.95.

Pergolesi—arr. Schering: **Il Maestro di Musica** (The Music Master). (Sung in English). Soloists and instrumentalists of Intimate Opera. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-291) \$5.95.

Carey—arr. Dunn: **True Blue, or The Press Gang**. One side, and **Hook**—arr. Woodhouse: **The Musical Courtship**. And, **The Dustcart Cantata** (Anon.—arr. Woodhouse). (Sung in English). Soloists and instrumentalists of Intimate Opera. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-293) \$4.95.

Intimate Opera, an organization founded in England in 1930, has become a by-word in British music circles and, through recordings and radio broadcasts, is spreading its fame farther afield. As its name implies, Intimate Opera presents works for two and three singers and a small group of instrumentalists. The mobility of this organization, owing to the small personnel, scenery and properties required, made it part of the morale-lift in England during World War II, entertaining soldiers and citizens alike.

In the three discs presented here, we have a cross-section of Intimate Opera's artistry. Most of the selections tend toward satire, farce or general sprightliness—not at all objectionable considering the nature of the material. The diction of the singers, among whom Keturah Sorrell (soprano), Stephen Manton

(tenor), and Frederick Woodhouse (basso) figure prominently, is perfect; the musicians, accompanying them with violins, viola, violoncello and harpsichord, are first-rate. We recommend the Purcell-Arne disc or the one containing *The Dustcart Cantata* for a starter. As for *The Music Master*, Allegro has already given us a spirited performance (*AL-AL-35) of this work which we consider as good or slightly superior to the present recording by virtue of a more amusing translation.

Wagner: Operatic Arias (Vol. 1). Helen Traubel (soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 4-12" discs in album (V-DM-1491) \$6.29. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1491) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1122) \$5.72.

Wagner: Operatic Arias (Vol. 2). Helen Traubel (soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 5-12" discs in album (V-DM-1492) \$7.59. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1492) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1123) \$5.72.

These two superb discs by Helen Traubel are welcome and long overdue additions to the Wagnerian repertory. There has been a curious dearth of LP Wagner recordings and these two records fill in some serious lacunae. Beginning with two scenes from *Tristan*, the selections range from *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* on through *Walküre*, *Götterdämmerung* and *Parsifal*.

In all of them Miss Traubel is in magnificent voice. For this reviewer she is the peer of Flagstad vocally and possesses one great advantage over the illustrious Norwegian singer in that she has a warmer and more sympathetic personality, a quality that makes her Isolde, her Elsa and Elisabeth more human, more real. The scene of the *Narrative and Curse* at once sets the stage for the really tremendous doings on the rest of the records. The closing curse is as dramatic as anything on records, while the thrice familiar *Liebestod* is exquisitely sung, very deliberate in tempo, conveying the impression that Isolde was a woman, not a Wagnerian soprano.

One could go on enumerating the virtues of these records, but space will not permit. Special mention must be made, however, of the exciting *Traft ihr das Schiff*. The same deliberate tempi are to be observed in this performance. How much the music gains from this type of treatment! One has an opportunity really to hear all the notes—and they are well worth hearing. Frieder Weissmann and the RCA-Victor Orchestra provide accompaniments that are well conceived and smoothly accomplished. Perhaps they could have been a little more forward; there is a tendency to make the voice over-prominent—but it is a beautiful and thrilling voice! In general, the recording is stunning, being clear and faithful with surfaces that are so quiet as to be almost non-existent. For the sake of completeness we list below the contents of each volume.

Volume 1 contains Isolde's *Narrative and Curse* and *Liebestod* from "Tristan und Isolde"; Elisabeth's *Gebet*

from "Tannhäuser"; and *Euch Lüften die mein Klagen* from "Lohengrin." Volume 2 contains *Du bist der Lenz*; *Der Männer Sippe*; and *Fort denn, eile from "Die Walküre"; Elsas Traum from "Lohengrin"; Helle Wehr! from "Die Götterdämmerung"; Ich sah das Kind from "Parsifal"; and Jo-ho-hoe! Traft ihr das Schiff from "Der Fliegende Holländer."* W.

Pergolesi Opera Arias. Ellen Faull (soprano) accompanied by Peter Rogell (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHC-41) \$5.45.

Here is a collection of opera arias by that short-lived genius of *opera buffa*, Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736). Pergolesi's fame to-day rests chiefly on occasional productions of *La Serva Padrona*, a classic of its kind.

But the Neapolitan composer was also the author of at least ten other operas, all of which have fallen into undeserved neglect. With such neglect in mind, Concert Hall Society has come to the fore with this LP disc, on which you will find eight arias from the operas of Pergolesi, many of them practically unknown.

Ellen Faull, soprano, with Peter Rogell at the piano, are the artists. Miss Faull, who has been appearing at the City center in recent seasons, singing such roles as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* and the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*, reveals a clear, well produced voice, and considerable talent for the classic style. Mr. Rogell's accompaniments companion the soprano's work admirably. Recording seems a little thin and contains a rather disturbing hollowness; surfaces are quiet.

For your information, the arias sung by Miss Faull are as follows: *Aria di Vanella* and *Canzone di Vanella* from *Lo Frate Nnamorato*; *Aria di Dorina* from *Il Geloso Schernito*; *Aria di Lauretta* and *Echo Song* from *Il Maestro di Musica*; *Aria di Martia* from *Catone*; and two arias from *Olympiade*.

You may find it a little monotonous playing all these selections one after another, but if you listen to one or two, you will experience a charming taste of an era long since past. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Donizetti: La Fille du Regiment (complete). (Sung in Italian). Rina Corsi, Lina Pagliughi (sopranos); Cesare Valletti (tenor); Sesto Bruscantini, Eraldo Coda (bassos); and Orchestra and Chorus of the Radio Italiana conducted by Mario Rossi. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1213) \$11.90.

Donizetti wrote 65 operas, 63 of which were performed in his lifetime. He wrote the 65 operas in a period of 26 years. In 1830 for example he composed six, in 1828 there were five, none of which survive. It was this indiscriminate writing that led Heinrich Heine to refer to Donizetti's fecundity as "not inferior to that of a rabbit." Of the total output only four hold the stage in America, with perhaps one or two more in Europe. Of the four, *La Figlia del Regimento* is, at best, an "in and out," usually being revived as a vehicle for a new coloratura soprano.

Nevertheless, it is a thoroughly delightful work, abounding in high spirits, fine tunes, excellent choruses and has a plot that is good theatre, combining such disparate elements as military sequences, pathos, love scenes and romantic adventure. Donizetti has written graceful, tuneful music that, while not of earth-shaking significance, is always appropriate and dramatically convincing.

Cetra's cast is impressive. The title role of Maria is sung by the brilliant Italian coloratura Lina Pagliughi. Her justly famous purity of tone, her amazing flexibility and perfect method stamp her as one of the great singers of her time. Sesto Bruscantini is an excellent Sulpizio. He is a fine bass, with a better than average sense of the theatre and possesses that rare ability—to create a character vocally. His performance is carefully thought out and intelligently sung. Cesare Valetti is a lyric tenor, remarkably free from the mannerisms that beset the average Italian tenor. No mock heroics and exaggerated *portamenti* mar his performance. It is a soundly conceived interpretation and vocally above reproach.

As usual, one must single out Mario Rossi for his direction. This is the fourth complete opera he has given us, and every one shows a grasp of the music that is far above the ordinary. His handling of the chorus and orchestra are superb, and the overall effect is musicianly to a degree. Cetra has supplied one of its more uniform recordings; it is good acoustically and the surfaces are quiet. W.

Strauss: Die Fledermaus (complete operetta). (Sung in English.) Lily Pons, Ljuba Welitch (sopranos); Martha Lipton (mezzo-soprano); Richard Tucker, Charles Kullman (tenors); John Brownlee (baritone); with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 12-12" discs in album (C-MOP-32) \$17.80. 2-12" discs in folder (*C-SL-108) \$11.90.

Columbia's recording of *Die Fledermaus* rounds out the trio of performances promised last Fall. It falls somewhere between the RCA-Victor (Highlights) and the superb London set. It is preferable to the Victor set only because it is complete. It is less satisfactory than the London recording for reasons that will be outlined below.

This new recording is advertised as "The Metropolitan's version of Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*." Someone must have had an attack of honesty in the copy department for this is exactly the truth. It is a "version" and it is not Strauss'. Columbia has assembled a cast that, vocally, would be hard to beat. Some of the brightest luminaries of the Metropolitan Opera Company are included. Mmes. Pons, Welitch and Lipton, for example, sing beautifully. Mssrs. Tucker, Kullman and Brownlee form a strong trio but . . .

The inevitable "but" is the complaint that must be registered about so many Metropolitan performances; it is a lack of expression amounting to indifference. Frankly, with the exception of John Brownlee, the

cast is wooden, dull and totally lacking in the required humor and lightness of touch that is one of the chief charms of the operetta, qualities that were fully realized, incidentally, in the London set.

Further, at the risk of being roundly censured, this reviewer feels that the singers were handicapped by the English book. Certainly Mmes. Pons and Welitch were, and quite possibly others were too. The words are "smart-alecky," Broadwayesque and, in some cases, not in the best of taste.

Eugene Ormandy, making his operatic *debut* on records, does a splendid job. Unlike his counterpart in the Victor recording, he very intelligently allows Strauss' incomparable melodies and rhythms to speak for themselves. It is a highly creditable performance and adds considerably to Mr. Ormandy's artistic stature.

Columbia's recording is fine throughout, being in fact, one of the finest domestic LP's to date. W.

Opera Recital. Paul Schoeffler (bass-baritone) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt and Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-288) \$5.95.

Die Walküre: Wotans Abschied und Feuerzauber (Act III).

Le Nozze di Figaro: No piu andrai (Act I).

Don Giovanni: Madamina, il catalogo (Act I).

Otello: Il Sogno: Era la notte (Act II); Credo in un Dio crudel (Act II).

Long-playing records make some strange bed-fellows and here we are treated to the spectacle of Wagner, Mozart and Verdi lying down together or, to make it appear more incongruous Wotan, Figaro, Leporello and Iago! London Records and Paul Schoeffler accomplish this, one of the neatest tricks of the year, in a surprisingly amiable manner.

This performance of the finale to *Die Walküre* is a portentous one. Schoeffler is stylistically and vocally a natural for Wotan. He perhaps comes closest to Frederick Schorr of any of the current interpreters of the role. And he has something Schorr never had—superlative recording. The combination of dignity and sorrow required of the artist by Wagner is perfectly realized. It is a moving and sincere performance.

The two Mozart arias and the *Otello* selections occupy the other side. It is very different music, as one can well imagine, but Herr Schoeffler proves equal to the occasion. His Figaro is jolly and witty; the famous *Catalog Aria* is not sung broadly or as slyly as, for example, in Baccaloni's recording. But it is, nevertheless, sung well and with expression. A fine performance of the suggestive *Era la notte* and a rousing rendition of the sinister *Credo* complete one of the best operatic LP discs in some time.

London's *ffrr* recording sounds fine and the Vienna Philharmonic under Rudolf Moralt for the Wagner and Karl Böhm for the Mozart and Verdi play with

all the finesse and tonal splendor one expects from this great organization. W.

Mozart: Don Giovanni, K. 527—Dalla sua pace (Act I). One side, and **Mozart: Don Giovanni, K. 527**—Il mio tesoro (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (D-16001) \$1.05.

Mozart: Die Entführung aus dem Serail, K. 384—O wie ängstlich, O wie feurig (Act I). One side, and **Mozart: Die Zauberflöte, K. 620**—Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön (Act I). (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (D-16002) \$1.05.

Weber: Der Freischütz—Durch die Wälder, durch die Auen (Act I). (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (D-16003) \$1.05.

Offenbach: Les Contes d'Hoffman—Légende de Kleinzach: Il était une fois (Act I). One side, and **Offenbach: Les Contes d'Hoffman**—O Dieux, de quelle ivresse (Act III). (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (D-16004) \$1.05.

Strauss: Der Zigeunerbaron—Als flotter Geist, doch früh verwaist. One side, and **Lehar: Das Land des Lächelns**—Dein ist mein ganzes Herz. (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (D-16011) \$1.05.

Lehar: Friederike—Sah' ein Knab' ein Röslein steh'n. One side, and **Lehar: Friederike**—O Mädchen, mein Mädchen. (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (D-16012) \$1.05.

Lehar: Die lustige Witwe—Lippen schweigen, 's flüstern Geigen. One side, and **Stolz: White Horse Inn**—Adieu, mein kleiner Gardeoffizier. (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (D-16013) \$1.05.

Lehar: Giuditta—Schönste der Frauen. One side, and **Lehar: Giuditta**—So wie um den Sonnenball. (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (D-16014) \$1.05.

NOTE: The first four items listed above are contained on 1-12" LP disc (*D-DL-8512) \$4.85. The last four items are contained on 1-10" LP disc (*D-DL-7511) \$3.85.

Decca has done a great service to all Tauber enthusiasts in releasing selections from operas and operettas taken from Parlophone masters of some years back. The transfer to unbreakable 78 rpm singles and to 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm LP discs has been accomplished successfully. In spite of the fact that one realizes that the recordings are not of the latest vintage, there is great pleasure in again hearing the voice of Richard Tauber, who sang to delighted audiences the world over.

In the LP versions of these selections, *La fleur que*

tu m'avais jetée from "Carmen" is included on *D-DL-8512 and *Schlösser die im Monde leigen* from "Frau Luna" (Lincke) is included on *D-DL-7511.

Monteverdi: Orfeo (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Elfriede Troetschel (soprano); Max Meili (tenor); with supporting soloists, Chorus and Chamber Orchestra of the Berlin Radio conducted by Helmut Koch, 3-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-6440) \$18.80.

The year 1607 was a great one for Mantua and for Monteverdi, for it was in the spring, at Carnival time, that *Orfeo* was first produced. From the few reports concerning this most significant first performance, it is evident that the new music was well received. The praises of the performers were sung, but it was the dramatic, emotional quality of the score and the unity of text and music that gained the praises of all the connoisseurs. The same holds true today. Monteverdi, alone, without any real precursor, created modern opera—modern music drama. It is an astonishing score for modern ears. We are used to Puccini, Verdi, Wagner, Mozart—but even with this background, one can sense the originality of Monteverdi's music and can guess (though only partially) the tremendous impact the work must have had on listeners some 344 years ago.

Orfeo follows the traditional division of the drama into a prologue and five acts. The story is the traditional one opening with the prologue, fittingly sung by La Musica and concluding with a *moresca*, a dance of the heavenly ballet. The performance is an excellent one—it has obviously been modernized as to orchestration and doubtless edited. The job has been done tastefully, however. Helmut Koch, the director, does a masterful bit of work with both orchestra and chorus. Max Meili, in the title role, is very fine. His declamation and singing are artistic and convincing. Vocally, he is more than adequate. Elfriede Troetschel, as Euridice, is also highly satisfactory. The supporting cast is of a high order, with Eva Fleischer who sings La Musica, outstanding. The entire performance was obviously well prepared and the results are gratifying.

The recording is very good and as for the surfaces—would that all LP's were as quiet as Vox pressings! W.

Verdi: Otello—Vanne; la tua meta già vedo (recit.); Credo in un Dio crudel (aria) (Act II). One side, and **Verdi: La Forza del Destino**—Urna fatale del mio destino (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Tito Gobbi (baritone) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by James Robertson. 1-12" disc (V-DB-21071) \$1.84.

Largely through his records which have sold in substantial quantities in this country, Tito Gobbi has gained a vast number of admirers on this side of the Atlantic. Whenever a new one is released abroad, many music lovers over here await its arrival with great interest. Thus the above listing will be welcome

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 ♂ indicates 45 rpm.

news to a goodly number of our readers. Mr. Gobbi sings these well-known arias in his usual excellent style and has the benefit of the best of English recording.

Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci—Vesti la giubba (Act I). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Bach**—arr. Gounod: Ave Maria. (Sung in Latin). Mario Lanza (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Constantine Callinicos. 1-10" disc (V-10-3228) \$1.16. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3228) \$1.16.

Mario Lanza, the sensational young operatic and movie star, is presently on a nation-wide concert tour, and from all reports he is packing the largest auditoriums in the country to the rafters. One of the selections that he always includes in his programs is the spirited operatic war-horse, *Vesti la giubba*. Therefore his great host of enthusiastic fans will be looking for this new disc. This young tenor is certainly blessed with a superb natural voice and, with further training and added experience, there seems to be no question but that he will go far in his chosen field.

Giordano: Marcella—Non conosciuto vo con gli amici o pur co' sogni miei (Act I). One side, and **Giordano: Serenata Malinconica**. (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Vito Carnevali. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1925) \$1.32.

A new record by Gigli is always an event of interest. His many admirers on this side of the Atlantic will be glad to know that this little HMV disc is now available. One would never think that these selections were sung by a tenor who is now sixty years of age.

VOCAL



Mahler: Des Knaben Wunderhorn ("The Youth's Magic Horn"). (Sung in German). Lorna Sydney (mezzo-soprano), Alfred Poell (baritone), with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 2-12" discs in album (*VAN-GUARD-VRS-412/3) \$11.90.

Back in 1805 two German poets, Clemens Maria Brentano and Ludwig Achim von Arnim met in Heidelberg and conceived the plan of publishing collected folk-songs of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. That same year saw the publication of the first volume, entitled *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. Some ninety odd years later, Gustav Mahler selected thirteen of the Wunderhorn texts, set them to music and, logically enough, called his set of songs for voice and orchestra *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* also.

These thirteen songs run the gamut of folk themes. There are tales of unrequited love, of gallows and ghosts, soldiers and their maids and, somewhat unexpectedly, several songs in a light, almost humorous vein. They represent Mahler in his lyric mood rather than as the architect of grandiose and gigantic symphonies.

Lorna Sydney and Alfred Poell share honors with

Felix Prohaska and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra. Dr. Poell (M.D. no less!) has a rich, robust baritone that in addition to being intelligently used, has considerable musical charm. Herr Poell can color a phrase and consequently sings with expression—a circumstance that makes his contribution to the set outstanding in every sense of the word. As a case in point, listen to his performance of the tragic *Tambours'sell* (The Drummer Boy); then hear the satirical *Lob des hohen Verstands* (Praise of Intellect). Miss Sydney, a young Australian mezzo-soprano, also gives a highly creditable performance and sings with persuasiveness and charm. Of special interest is her singing of the song *Urlicht* (Primeval Light) which Mahler used in the fourth movement of his *Resurrection* (Second) Symphony.

Felix Prohaska and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra provide finely wrought and sympathetic accompaniments and the recording and surfaces are of the first quality. The set is recommended to all Mahler enthusiasts and also to those whose acquaintance with the music of this strange and unhappy genius is only of the nodding variety. W.

Schumann: Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42. One side, and **Brahms: (4) Ernste Gesänge, Op. 121**. (Sung in German). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) accompanied by John Newmark (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-271) \$5.95.

Songs of Mozart. One side, and **Songs of Schubert**. (Sung in German). Genevieve Warner (soprano) accompanied by Franz Rupp (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4365) \$5.45.

The long awaited recording of Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben* by Kathleen Ferrier has at last been released by London. It came as a bit of an anticlimax to this reviewer, due principally to the exquisite recording of the same music by Marian Anderson that appeared several months ago (TNR Jan. '51). Miss Ferrier is an extremely talented young artist, but her voice lacks the sheer vocal splendor of Miss Anderson's. She does, however, project these *lieder* very sensitively and expressively. In addition, there is the undisputed advantage of LP. The reverse side of the disc contains an excellent recording of Brahms' *Vier Ernste Gesänge*. These are Biblical Songs, the first three having texts from Ecclesiastes, and the last a setting of the famous passage from I Corinthians. They are Brahms at his best and, while one feels that they are more suitable for a man's voice, Miss Ferrier is more than adequate and becomes, on occasion, very convincing.

Columbia surprises this month with a young soprano, new to records, in the person of Genevieve Warner—surprises in more ways than one, for the selections are, in many cases, recorded for the first time. Such Mozart *lieder* as *Das Lied der Trennung* and *Abendempfindung* and the *Ariette*—*Dans un bois solitaire* are more than welcome. And Schubert songs such as *Gott im Frühling*, *Die Gebüsche* and *Im Frühling* are not only unfamiliar, they are also

extremely beautiful. This latter adjective applies also to Miss Warner's singing. Her voice is sympathetic and extremely well suited to *lieder* singing. In addition to the songs mentioned above there are three more familiar songs by Mozart and three others by Schubert. The notes on the jacket inform us that Miss Warner is a native of Amsterdam, N. Y. and that she recently made her Metropolitan debut. Her voice is reminiscent of Ria Ginster's, being high, clear, and capable of many shadings and colorings. It can safely be said that we will be hearing more from her.

Both London and Columbia have supplied excellent recording with quiet surfaces. W.

Couperin: Leçons de Tenebres—No. 1 (for Wednesday of Holy Week). One side, and **Couperin: (3) Songs and Couperin: Motet** (Audite Omnes). (Sung in French). Hugues Cuenod (tenor) with instrumental accompaniment conducted by Daniel Pinkham. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-91) \$5.95.

François Couperin ("le Grand") was the most illustrious member of France's foremost musical family. He was born in Paris on Nov. 10, 1668, and received his early schooling from his father. His chief fame, during his lifetime, rested on his ability as organist (at Saint Gervais) and his Method "*L'art de toucher le clavecin*." It is somewhat unusual that, although he was a church organist, he composed very little for that instrument and there are only two church compositions extant.

Of the two (the other is a series of motets) the *Tenebrae Services* are the best known. Originally there were three sets of three each for Wednesday of Holy Week, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Only those for Wednesday have been preserved and it is the first service that is recorded here. The text is based on the Book of Jeremiah (Chapter I, verses 1-5). Hugues Cuenod, who has made a specialty of this type of music, does a difficult job in a thoroughly convincing fashion. The *Service* is long, running a full LP side (approximately 20 minutes). This is not sensual music, rather the opposite—it is severe and requires several hearings in order to understand it.

A very effective contrast is supplied on the over side by three songs *Air Sereux*, *La Pastorelle* and *Les Solitaires*. They are typically French and full of graceful melodies. The first dates from 1697. The second, *La Pastorelle*, was also published as a *pièce de clavecin* and is included here, in this version, in addition to its arrangement as a song. It makes a very interesting study. The last song is a sensual love poem, dating from 1711. The remainder of this side is devoted to a performance, by Hugues Cuenod and Messrs. Brink and Waterhouse (violins) and Pinkham (harp-sichord) of the Motet *Audite Omnes*. This is in the style of the *Tenebrae Service* and is a sort of sermon set to music. It is very effectively done.

The disc is one of absorbing interest, particularly for the *cognoscenti*. Good recording, quiet surfaces. W.

Songs of the Auvergne. Susan Reed (soprano) accompanied by chamber group. 3-12" discs in album (CMM-984) \$4.88.

Folk Songs. Susan Reed (soprano) accompanying herself on the Irish harp, guitar and zither. Coupled with **Songs of the Auvergne**. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54368) \$5.45.

When we heard that Columbia would issue an LP version of *Songs of the Auvergne*, we naturally thought that Madeline Grey's fine performance (CMM-758) had been transferred to 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm discs. When our copy arrived, we began listening—grudgingly, we admit—to Susan Reed's rendition of the old French folk songs. While she has not had the training so obviously apparent when one listens to the earlier singer, nor the charming orchestral background accompanying Miss Grey, Susan Reed manages to acquit herself with grace and feeling. There can be no doubt, however, that when she accompanies herself in the folk songs that occupy the reverse side of this disc, she is in her true element. This is a good addition to any record library provided it does not already include Madeline Grey's album.

Monteverdi: Tirsi e Clori. (Sung in Italian.) Max Meili (tenor) and Elsa Scherz-Meister (soprano) with the ensemble of voices and ancient instruments of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis directed by August Wenzinger. One side, and **Monteverdi: Il ritorno d'Ulyse in Patri**—Iro's air; and **Monteverdi: Concerto for Tenor and Strings.** (Sung in Italian.) Max Meili (tenor) with the ensemble of voices and ancient instruments of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis directed by August Wenzinger. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1085) \$5.95.

Monteverdi (1567-1643) was a pioneer in writing appropriate music to a dramatic text from which developed the modern opera. The present unusual LP disc contains excellent examples of his work in that form. It is presented on this disc in the true tradition by artists who have spent years in the study of this music. Max Meili is well-known throughout Europe and has appeared at numerous Salzberg Festivals. Elsa Scherz-Meister, a distinguished Swiss soprano, is noted for her work in oratorios and is affiliated with the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, which is famous for its performances of such music as is to be found on this LP disc.

As the reproduction is of the very best, this LP record is one that calls for high praise from every angle.

Great Songs of Faith. Nelson Eddy (baritone) with Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Leon Arnaud. 3-12" discs in album (CMM-983) \$4.88. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2166) \$4.

The popular baritone, Nelson Eddy, has added another recording to the already imposing list that he has made. This time he has gathered together a group of religious songs known the world over. He sings them with great simplicity against a background

of chorus and orchestra that at no time becomes super-dramatic. Mr. Eddy sings *The Palms*; Handel's *Largo*; Bizet's *Agnus Dei*; *Panis Angelicus*; *The Holy City*; and *There is a Green Hill Far Away*.

Schubert: Schwanengesang—Liebesbotschaft. One side, and **Schubert: Gretchen am Spinnrade**, Op. 2. (Sung in German). Marian Anderson (contralto) accompanied by Franz Rupp (piano). 1-7" disc (ϕV-49-3158) \$1.16.

Handel: Ottone—Come to me, soothing sleep. One side, and **Handel: Floridante**—O what pleasure! And **Handel: The trumpet is calling**. (Sung in English). Marian Anderson (contralto) accompanied by Franz Rupp (piano). 1-7" disc (ϕV-49-3157) \$1.16.

Marian Anderson's releases—too few these days—ever reassure us that her voice is as ageless as it is thrilling. As always, when Miss Anderson sings Schubert *lieder*, she is incomparable. The Handel selections, unfortunately, are fairly pedestrian and certainly no match for her artistry. These selections are available on 45 rpm discs only.

Kahn: The Song's Gotta Come from the Heart. One side, and **Barnett: A Real Piano Player**. Helen Traubel (soprano) assisted by Jimmie Durante with orchestra conducted by Roy Barge. 1-12" disc (V-12-3229) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (ϕV-49-3229) \$1.16.

Last winter Helen Traubel and Jimmie Durante appeared twice on television programs in a couple of amusing sketches. The public seemed to think that they were great stuff and so RCA Victor has recorded two of the funniest selections from these broadcasts. We got a smile or two from them, and perhaps you will too when you hear them.

Wagner: Der Engel (No. 1 from "Fünf Wesendonck Gedichte"). One side, and **Wagner: Stehe still** (No. 2 from "Fünf Wesendonck Gedichte"). (Sung in German). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano), accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (V-DB-6841) \$1.84.

Brahms: Gestillte Sehnsucht, Op. 91, No. 1 (from "Two Songs for Alto Voice, Viola and Piano"). (Sung in German.) Kirsten Flagstad (soprano), Herbert Downes (viola) and Gerald Moore (piano). 1-10" disc (V-DA-1932) \$1.32.

Any new recordings by Flagstad have a market of considerable size awaiting them in this country. It is only necessary, therefore, to list them and state that they are presently available. The two discs mentioned above arrived in a recent shipment from England.

Fauré: La Bonne Chanson, Op. 61—L'Hiver a cessé. One side, and **Debussy: Aquarelles—Green** (Ariettes oubliées No. 5). Maggie Teyte (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-10" disc (V-DA-1893). \$1.32.

A new record by Maggie Teyte is always a cause

for rejoicing among those initiated in the realm of artistic singing. The present disc is no exception, and we are sure that Miss Teyte's host of admirers in this country will lose no time in investigating it just as soon as they know that copies are available from abroad.

Miss Teyte uses excellent judgment in the songs that she selects to record. She knows her present limitations and she knows the type of song in which she is practically supreme—in a class by herself. The present lovely French songs by Fauré and Debussy were seemingly made-to-order for her, and thus we have a disc that calls for the highest praise. Miss Teyte was also very wise in selecting England's greatest accompanist, Gerald Moore—the charm of the present recording is greatly enhanced by his most artistic support. If you are interested in the art of accompanying, just try to forget Miss Teyte's singing and listen for Mr. Moore's part in these recordings—it is magnificent!

Berlin: You're Just in Love. One side, and **Berlin: It's a Lovely Day Today**. Risé Stevens (mezzo-soprano) and Robert Merrill (baritone) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Ted Dale. 1-10" disc (V-10-3108) \$1.16. 1-7" disc (ϕV-49-3108) \$1.16.

Two of the most tuneful and captivating melodies from the current Broadway success, *Call Me Madam*, have been given expert treatment here by two operatic singers who can show their lighter side.

Fauré: Songs. Ninon Vallin (soprano) accompanied by Maurice Fauré (piano). 1-10" disc (*VX-PTL-1730) \$4.75.

The name of Ninon Vallin will not be new to many record collectors who can remember, with nostalgic pleasure, her many records for Odéon, Pathé and Columbia—such gramophonic classics as *Werther* and *Louise*, and even before these, excerpts from *Faust*, *Manon* and *Carmen* with René Maison, Villabella and others. In the early days of electrical recording, Mme. Vallin was one of the great stars, the possessor of a lovely lyric soprano—unique among French singers, in that there was no harshness, none of the nasal quality that so often marred even the best French voices.

Now, for the benefit of younger collectors (or some of the older ones who may have overlooked these songs), Vox has issued an LP disc containing eight songs by the French Master, Gabriel Fauré. Each song is a polished little gem, typically Gallic, and all are highly evocative. Fauré had excellent literary taste, and his songs are numbered among his finest compositions.

Included in the songs here recorded are such ranking favorites as *Les Roses d'Ispahan*, *Au Cimetière* and *Le Parfum Impérisable*. Among the less frequently heard are the haunting *Le Secret*, the beautiful *En Sourdine* and the classic *Aurore*. Mme. Vallin sings all these exquisite lyrics with an ease and sense

of style that, while one has come to expect it of her, is still breath-taking in its loveliness. It is good to have them in new dress, as it were, and it is fervently hoped that Vox will see fit to reissue some of the now almost legendary recordings from *Manon* and *Car-men*.

CHORAL



Sacred Music of the Renaissance. Roman-Vatican Choir directed by Rt. Rev. Msgr. Licinio Refice. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10063) \$4.85.

Lassus: *Jubilate deo*.

Palestrina: *Regina coeli*; *Incipit oratio Jeremiae*; *Super flumina Babylonis*.

Victoria: *Ave Maria*; *Caudent in coelis*; *Tenebrae factae sunt*; *Animan meam*.

Viadana: *Exsultate justi*.

In the late summer of 1947, a hand-picked group of 54 men and boys from the four chapel choirs of the Vatican, arrived in this country for a nation-wide tour. With their distinguished composer-conductor Msgr. Licinio Refice, they toured North America with conspicuous success.

The choir and Msgr. Refice obviously know their way about in such music as this, and their performances are masterly and authentic. Especially moving are the Palestrina items and Viadana's setting of the 33rd Psalm, *Exsultate justi*. The music of Tomás Luis da Victoria is also of more than passing interest. There is a mysticism and a sensuousness that are combined in a wholly unique fashion and can be compared only, perhaps, with the paintings of his extraordinary compatriot, El Greco. *Ave Maria* is the most lyric of this group, while the setting of the final moments of the Crucifixion, *Tenebrae factae sunt* is impassioned and dramatic.

It is a pity that the recording, made at the Hollywood Bowl on September 21-22, 1947, could not have been accomplished more satisfactorily. Recording at a public performance is always difficult and Mercury's engineers did not fare too well. There is an extraordinary "deadness" about the recording, reminiscent of Victor's old Studio 8-H jobs, that is difficult to account for since these recordings were made out of doors! As a souvenir of the Vatican Choir's visit, as well as a permanent record of their interpretations, the record is satisfactory. The surfaces are good. W.

Haydn: Missa in Tempore Belli in C ("Paukenmesse"). Soloists with the Akademie Chorus of Vienna and the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hans Gillesberger. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-2021) \$5.95.

This reviewer, turning from the Westminster recording of Bach's *B Minor Mass* to the present set, received one of the greatest musical thrills he ever experienced. To suddenly change from Bach's remote Olympian heights to Haydn's very real human-

ity was an impression not soon to be forgotten. Both *Masses* are great, both men were sincere and reverent—but fundamentally how different in approach! It is further proof, if such proof were necessary, of how many dissimilar and almost irreconcilable Christianities there are.

The *Paukenmesse* in C was written for Prince Esterhazy (the fourth of this illustrious line that Haydn served) shortly after Haydn returned from his second visit to England. It was in England, of course, that Haydn heard many of the great choral works of Handel and the deep impression they made can be discerned in the writing for chorus in this, as well as in subsequent *Masses* and *Oratorios* he wrote. All the familiar elements of Haydn's mature style are here, along with an added assurance in the contrapuntal writing that engenders a feeling of strength and nobility that marks all truly great music.

The Haydn Society's recording and performance leave nothing to be desired. The soloists are all very fine with special praise due to the *basso* Hans Braun for his thoroughly admirable singing of the tender and moving *Qui tollis* and to soprano Jetty Topitz-Feiler for her exquisite singing of the *Kyrie eleison*. Dr. Hans Gillesberger gives his usual careful attention to the score and the results are both musicianly and scholarly—which, incidentally, is a remarkable feat.

This is undoubtedly one of the finest LP releases to date and is obviously highly recommended. W.

PIANO



Beethoven: Sonata No. 17 in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2 ("Tempest"). Byron Janis (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1485) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-50) \$4.67.

Byron Janis, the young American pianist, makes an auspicious debut on long-playing records with this recording. With the exception of a now venerable version (C-MX-39) by Gieseking, this new release is the first domestic one in years. A moody composition, the *Tempest* Sonata will anticipate for most listeners the *Appassionata*, although there is no duplication in melody. It is expressively played by Mr. Janis, from whom we will undoubtedly hear more.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 30 in E, Op. 109. One side, and **Chopin: Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-266) \$5.95.

The distinguished German pianist, Wilhelm Backhaus, has a host of admirers in this country, and there is always a demand for his recordings. It is therefore only necessary to announce that a new disc is available. We might mention that the present LP disc has been recorded at a very high volume level and thus it is suggested that you turn the volume control on your phonograph well down when playing it. Even when this precaution is taken, it is not possible to eliminate entirely some annoying blasting.

Bach—trans. Siloti: **Organ Prelude in G minor**. One side, and **Bach: Fugue in G minor** ("Little"). William Schatzkamer (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-1287) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-1339) \$1.16.

The brilliant young American pianist, William Schatzkamer, whose recording of a Scriabin Sonata issued over a year ago (V-12-1050) was greeted with considerable praise by discerning music lovers, now offers renditions of two well-known Bach selections. In these his "singing" tone does not seem quite so appropriate as it did in the Scriabin piece and we are rather of the opinion that conservative Bach lovers will feel that Schatzkamer is just not in the tradition of the immortal Johann Sebastian.

Liszt—trans. Horowitz: **Rákóczy March**. Vladimir Horowitz (piano) 1-12" disc (V-12-3154) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3154) \$1.16.

Vladimir Horowitz' transcription of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 15* will delight his many followers with its vigorous, forthright presentation of a well-known orchestral selection.

Mozart: Sonata No. 4 in E-flat, K. 282 and **Mozart: Sonata in F, K. 280**. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata in D, K. 284**. Leonid Hambro (piano) 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-54) \$.45.

Mozart: Sonata No. 8 in A minor, K. 310. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 11 in A, K. 331**. Lili Kraus (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PLP-6310) \$.95.

This pair of LP discs contain some of Mozart's loveliest piano sonatas: two played by an artist with an established international reputation, the celebrated Lili Kraus, and two by a young pianist who is rapidly gaining in fame in this country. That artist, who is still in his twenties, is Leonid Hambro. Mr. Hambro has received three awards from the Society of American Musicians; a fellowship in the Juilliard School of Music; the Naumburg Foundation Award; and has recently been appointed to the faculty of the Juilliard School. He had a most successful recital in Carnegie Hall in November 1949 and since that time has appeared with the New York Philharmonic and has completed a concert tour of thirty-six recitals that took him to all parts of the United States.

We believe that those interested in piano recordings will find both of these discs very attractive. The piano reproduction on both of them is highly satisfactory.

ORGAN



Monuments of Baroque Organ Music. Walter Supper (organ). 2-12" discs in folder (*RENAISSANCE-SX-202) \$11.90.

This is beyond all doubt the greatest organ recording yet to appear on LP discs, and may easily be the best we have ever had (it ranks with the famous Pathé set of some years ago). We have never had a real all-out love for these so-called baroque organs, and have not hesitated to carp about the various assorted squeaks and squeals which pass for organ

music that we hear from many of these antique instruments. But if this present set is genuine baroque organ music, we can only say "why didn't someone tell us about this long ago?" The sounds that issue from these four sides absolutely beggar description. Anyone who likes real organ tone will revel in this album. These organs are as different from the squeakers they build in this country as night from day. There are four different organs recorded here, all eighteenth century instruments. They are the Gabler organ in Ochsenhausen (1729), the Gabler organ in Weingarten (1737-1750), the Riepp organ in Ottobeuren (1754-1766), and the Holzhey organ in Rot an der Rot (1785-1786); all located in Upper Swabia, an area taking in part of Southern Wurttemberg and part of Southern Bavaria between the Danube and Lake Constance. Each side of a disc is devoted to recordings of one of these organs. The music played is by Sweelinck, Steigleder, Buxtehude, Pachelbel, Bruhns, Walther, Bach, and Simon, and is played and registered superbly. The reproduction is as gorgeous as the instruments.

Upon opening the two pocket record folder you will find two pages of informative notes, stoplists of each organ, brief notes about the music, and some pictures. The picture on the front cover is the Weingarten organ case, a work of art in itself. This Weingarten organ is a big one, over 150 ranks of pipes, two-thirds of them mixtures, and they are mixtures as they should be—of surpassing sweetness and beauty and of staggering power. The cumulative effect of this instrument is like nothing you have ever heard before. The solo effects in all the organs are lovely, while the tuttis sing with glorious power. We could go on rhapsodizing for sixteen more paragraphs, but it is useless; you must hear this set to believe it. If you have ever had half a hankering for some real good organ music don't pass up this gem. For dyed-in-the-wool organ fans, we need say nothing further; this is as close to perfection as you will ever hear. S.

MISCELLANEOUS



A Flute Recital. Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute) accompanied by Robert Veyron-Lacroix (piano). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10067) \$.485.

Bach: *Sonata in A minor*.

Beethoven: *Sonata in B-flat*.

Honegger: *Danse de la Chèvre*.

Roussel: *Andante and Scherzo, Op. 51*.

Dukas: *La Plainte au loin du Faune*.

Hindemith: *Sonata (1936)*.

This is certainly a disc for those who are particularly interested in the flute. It contains a wealth of music for that instrument both as an unaccompanied solo instrument and in combination with the piano. It introduces the brilliant young French flutist, Jean-Pierre Rampal. M. Rampal was born in Marseilles in 1922 and began his studies with his father who

was a member of the faculty of the Conservatory in that city. Later he went to the Paris Conservatory and studied under Gaston Crunelle. There he covered himself with honors and has since become one of the leading European flutists. We especially recommend this record to all students of M. Rampal's instrument.

Music of the Orient. Compiled and arranged by Dr. E. M. von Hornbostel. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-107) \$11.70.

This collection of oriental music, still the finest of its kind, has been unavailable for some years. Decca has now released an LP edition of it with full explanatory notes. For those interested in music that is out-of-the-ordinary, here is an opportunity to study and enjoy the music of the Eastern world. The countries represented are Japan, China, Java, Bali, Siam, India, Persia, Egypt and Tunis.

Music of the Gothic Period (Vol. 2). Vielle Trio, with Du Bose Robertson (tenor). 2-12" discs in folder (*AL-AL-72) \$10.90.

The first volume of this music by the Vielle Trio with Du Bose Robertson (tenor) was issued in the fall of 1949 (TNR Nov. '49). It has had a limited but steady sale. For those who are interested in the music of the 14th, 15th and 16th century it is a must. For further information about this music and the artists who record it, one should send for a copy of the TNR mentioned above.



DICTION

Poems by Stephen Spender. Stephen Spender (speaking). 3-12" discs in album (V-C-3987 to V-C-3989) (manual sequence only) \$4.74.

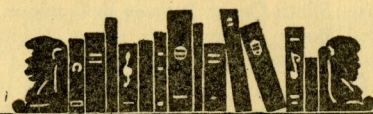
Stephen Spender, whose father, Edward Harold, and whose uncle, John Alfred Spender, were distinguished British journalists, is one of the major poets in England today. It is therefore of interest to have readings of some of his poems by their author. Three of his most famous will be found with several others in this collection. They are *An Elementary Class Room*; *Elegy to Margaret*; and *Tom's a-Cold*.



HARPSICHORD

Scarlatti Sonatas for Harpsichord. Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (*CH-CHS-1070) \$4.67.

The distinguished American harpsichordist, Ralph Kirkpatrick, has selected for this LP disc nine from the vast number (over 500) of sonatas that Scarlatti (1659-1725) composed in the last twenty years of his life. They are all attractive little pieces, and as played by Mr. Kirkpatrick they bring to us the musical atmosphere of an age long since passed. Concert Hall has supplied the best of modern reproduction.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, AL—Allegro, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DG—Deutsche Gramophone, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HS—Haydn Society, HW—Hargail, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, T—Telefunken, V—Victor, VX—Vox, WEST—Westminster, and W—Woodwind.

* indicates LP 83 1/3 rpm.
 ♪ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 3

MAY, 1951

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

IN November 1950 we made the rather startling announcement that RCA Victor had divided its catalog into two sections: "The Music America Loves Best" section contained all recent releases and those records that had a wide and continued appeal; the "Request" section contained records that would be of interest to "the connoisseur of fine music."

RCA Victor has recently revised both catalogs and brought them up to date. It is assumed that every dealer will carry the "MALB" items in stock, but that "Request" items will be available on special order only. We rather imagine that the more important dealers in the large cities will stock all recordings in both catalogs; however, if the dealer's stock of any "Request" item becomes depleted, he must wait from two to four months before it can be replenished.

The new editions of both catalogs are now available from the publishers of this bulletin. "The Music America Loves Best" catalog (280 pp.) is 15¢. The "Request" catalog (136 pp.) is 20¢. Both prices are postpaid in U.S.A.

NEW LP RELEASES

Verdi: *Aida* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Caniglia, Stignani, Huder, Gigli, Zagonara, Bechi, Pasero, Tajo with chorus and orchestra of Rome Opera—Serafin. 4-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6400) \$22.88. (TNR Mar. '49).

Mascagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Rasa, Gigli, Bechi, Marcucci, Simionato with chorus and orchestra of La Scala (Milan)—Mascagni. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6000) \$11.44. (TNR Mar. '49).

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is

\$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 1/3 r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA

Bruckner: *Symphony No. 6* in A. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. Three sides, and Bruckner: *112th Psalm* and Bruckner: *150th Psalm*. Hilde Ceska (soprano) with the Vienna Kammerchor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WL-5055/6) \$11.90.

This is the first recording we can recall of the Bruckner *Sixth Symphony*, which is in a way surprising, for Bruckner appears frequently on programs in Germany and Austria and recordings of his symphonies have been made there for many years. Bruckner is held in high regard in these countries, whereas he is still something of a curiosity in our country. Obviously, Brucknerites have welcomed the LP system heartily, for it permits a much better slant on his music. Bruckner is a lofty and long-winded man, whose music is slow moving, lengthy, and of a rather mystical quality that is greatly disturbed by record side breaks. The *Sixth* takes three 12" LP sides; the four movements are played uninterrupted. Swoboda uses the original, unedited, uncut version of the score.

The opening movement takes up the "Romantic" burden of the *Fourth Symphony*, but in a calmer, more disciplined expression—less radiant and ecstatic, deeper and more delicate. Notable in this symphony is, for the first time in symphonic literature, the innovation in sonata form. The listener, alert for the traditional "bridge" leading to the recapitulation, is suddenly aware that he is in the midst of the restatement—the climax of the development and the beginning of the recapitulation coincide. He used this device with increasing effectiveness in his subsequent symphonies. The magic chatter of elfin spirits characterizes the highly impressionistic Scherzo. The finale is noticeably calmer than usual for Bruckner; however all the thematic factors are drawn together at the end in a masterly summing up, and they become

merged in a jubilant final re-entry of the work's opening theme.

The juxtaposition of the two Psalms on the face of a single record is most felicitous. It reveals Bruckner's growth in artistic stature during the three decades separating the two choral works. These magnificent creations are on Bruckner's usual awe-inspiring plane. The underlying texts are nearly identical in content, and his settings of the words is both masterly and appropriate.

We cannot judge these performances on a comparative basis, but on the impression and feeling they create, we would call them excellent. The reproduction is good, surfaces likewise. Brucknerites will be highly pleased with this issue. S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 38 ("Spring"). One side, and **Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120.** German Philharmonic Orchestra (Prague) conducted by Joseph Keilberth. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8129) \$4.98.

All of Schumann's symphonies are now available in two different interpretations on LP discs. The *First* and *Fourth* here presented on one 12" disc are a good value. The *Fourth* was recently issued by Mercury (MG-15001) singly on a 10" disc, played by Keilberth and the Prague Orchestra—exactly the same performance we have on the present disc. The Mercury disc will undoubtedly enjoy a very modest sale from this point on. The *First* and *Fourth* are issued separately on single 10" discs by Columbia, conducted by Leinsdorf and Szell, respectively. These Columbias are far better in fidelity than the Prague recordings, and are also much more taut and highly disciplined performances. Many will prefer them for their orchestral excellence and for the reproduction which mirrors this excellence so faithfully. But we believe there are just as many who love these romantic Schumann symphonies who will be pleased with the continental interpretations offered by Keilberth. He gives the music a lot of leeway without ever allowing it to lose shape or become overly sentimental. There is knowledge, understanding and sympathy for Schumann's idiom. The *Fourth*, being on one record side, is played uninterrupted as intended, and benefits greatly from this arrangement.

Placing the *First* and the *Fourth* on one disc is a good idea when one considers that the *Fourth* was actually the second in order of composition. A decade after it was written it was revised in instrumentation and published as his Symphony No. 4, but it was originally written in the same year as the No. 1. The *Fourth* is for most folks Schumann's most enjoyable symphony, one reason being its charming thematic material which is used here and there in all four movements. Employing thematic material in common throughout the four sections, which are also connected without pause, makes for unity and keeps the interest at a peak. While the reproduction of this disc is not the highest by today's standards, it is nevertheless pleasant and most listenable. All things

considered, we would recommend it, particularly as good Schumann performances. S.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 9 in C. One side, and **Manfredini: Christmas Concerto.** The American Arts Orchestra conducted by Karl Krueger. 1-12" disc (*NEW RECORDS-NRLP-102) \$5.75.

Enesco: Octet in C for Strings, Op. 7. The American Arts Orchestra conducted by Karl Krueger. 1-12" disc (*NEW RECORDS-NRLP-101) \$5.75.

For those of our readers who are surprised to see a Mendelssohn symphony designated No. 9, perhaps a note of explanation is in order. Mendelssohn wrote this work originally as a string quartet but, upon the urging of friends, re-worked it into its present form. It has never been published and is played in this instance from manuscript. No mention is made in the note accompanying this disc as to why the composition has remained in obscurity. It is most certainly music of excellent quality—not earth-shaking, but undoubtedly mature work written in a fine, retrospective vein.

Francesco Manfredini, born in Pistoia, Italy, in 1688, fell into comparative oblivion after his death. In fact, the date of his death is still unknown. Among the few compositions surviving is this *Christmas Concerto* which has a simplicity of style that is truly appealing.

Most music lovers will think only of the *Roumanian Rhapsodies* when Georges Enesco's name is mentioned. As a composer, Mr. Enesco has never really asserted himself, since he has devoted most of his time to the concert stage as pianist, violinist or conductor, as the occasion demanded. However, here we have his *Octet in C* played in a fuller version for string orchestra. As a composition it is more subtle in melodic content than the *Rhapsodies* but the Roumanian flavor is there. Altogether, it is as ingratiating and captivating a chamber work as one could wish for. The American Arts Orchestra and Karl Krueger must be complimented for presenting three "unknown" compositions with such fine musicianship. H.

Ravel: Valses Nobles et Sentimentales. One side, and **Debussy: Iberia** (Images pour Orchestre, No. 2). Grand Orchestre Symphonique de l'Institut National Radiodiffusion (Belgium) conducted by Franz André. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8132) \$4.98.

A bouquet must be handed to Capitol-Telefunken for giving some thought to the compositions they combine on a long-playing disc. We cannot off-hand think of any incongruities in their couplings so far. Here, for instance, are two modern composers—both Frenchmen and one (Debussy) a direct influence on the other. The compositions, while decidedly different in character, have beauty and polish that are peculiarly French.

Iberia is an impressionistic portrait of Spain that few Spaniards have been able to rival. Ravel's *Valses* have a bitter-sweet quality that haunts one long after hearing them. It is difficult to realize, after hearing

them in the full color of the orchestra, that they were originally composed for four hands at the piano.

Saint-Saëns: Danse Macabre, Op. 40. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (C-13150D) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (C-4-13150D) \$1.15.

Saint-Saëns: Le Rouet d'Omphale, Op. 31 (Omphale's Spinning Wheel). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (C-13151D) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (C-4-13151D) \$1.15.

Rabaud: La Procession Nocturne, Op. 6. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. Coupled with **Saint-Saëns: Danse Macabre** and **Saint-Saëns: Le Rouet d'Omphale**. 1-10" (*C-ML-2170) \$4.

We have here an oddity: a series of compositions on one LP that are in some way related to each other. Both composers are French and of the same general school; all three works are tone-poems; and all have a constant flow of melody. *Danse Macabre*, to be sure, needs no further comment. *Omphale's Spinning Wheel*, a lesser-known work, has pleasing rhythms in keeping with the legend it depicts in music. Rabaud's *Nocturnal Procession* is based on an episode in the Faust legend and, as its title suggests, concerns itself with a religious procession come upon by Faust in a lonely walk through the forest at night. The music is hauntingly beautiful, with a solemn tone suggestive of, but not derived from, *Parsifal*.

Gershwin: An American in Paris. One side, and **Newman: Motion Picture Music.** Hollywood Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alfred Newman. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-20037) \$4.85.

Music for Orchestra. One side, and **Invitation to the Ballet.** Hollywood Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alfred Newman. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-20036) \$4.85.

Those of our readers who have enjoyed the previous recordings Alfred Newman has offered via Mercury discs will be pleased to know that he is responsible for two new releases. With the exception of the Gershwin classic, "An American in Paris," both records are devoted to short semi-classical compositions and excerpts from sound scores to motion pictures—these latter composed by the conductor himself for some film successes of the recent past.

On the disc which includes a rousing performance of the Gershwin work, there is also music from *Wuthering Heights*; *All About Eve*; *Song of Bernadette*; *The Razor's Edge*; *Pinky*; and *A Letter to Three Wives*. The second record presents such traditional items as *Waltz of the Flowers*; *Dance of the Buffoons*; *Offenbach's Can-Can*; *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty* excerpts, together with less familiar works, including *Banjo and Fiddle* (Kroll); *Second Prelude* (Gershwin); *Vienna Beauties* (Zeihrer); and *Jamaican Rhumba* (Benjamin). As one may observe

there is a variety of musical memorabilia here. Other than to say that both discs are well-recorded and well-played, we leave our readers to judge whether or not they will fill gaps in their record libraries.

Haydn: Symphony No. 6 in D ("Le Matin"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 21 in A.** Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Fritz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-1025) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 26 in D minor ("Sinfonia Lamentazione"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 36 in E-flat.** Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Anton Heiller. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-1019) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 42 in D. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 47 in G.** Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Fritz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-1026) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 103 in E-flat ("Drum Roll"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 80 in D minor.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5050) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 100 in G ("Military"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 95 in C minor.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5045) \$5.95.

In announcing another set of Haydn symphonies, we feel rather like the gentleman about to introduce a famous personage about whom everything is known: we want to say something new and yet there's nothing really worth knowing at this late date that has not been said again and again. The ten symphonies listed here, running from one of his earliest to the last-but-one, present a fairly over-all picture of Haydn's growth in musical composition. The early ones are but extensions of the concerto grosso form but gradually the orchestration becomes heavier and the melodic content more pronounced until the later symphonies reveal an indefatigable master of music.

All the symphonies here represented are lovingly performed by musicians of the first order. We recommend particularly the Westminster disc containing the *Military Symphony* as an example of how a composition can live up to its nickname. The percussion section takes all honors without a doubt and stirred even our "unmilitary" senses.

Barber: "Capricorn" Concerto, Op. 21. Sondheim Little Symphony conducted by Daniel Sondheim, featuring Julius Baker (flute), Harry Freistadt (trumpet) and Mitchell Miller (oboe). One side, and **Schuman: Symphony for Strings (1943).** Concert Hall String Symphony conducted by Edgar Schenkman. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1078) \$5.95.

This LP disc contains works by two American composers of established reputations, both of whom were born in 1910—Mr. Barber is senior by several months—each has won Pulitzer Prizes and they are presently

recognized as outstanding musicians both in this country and abroad.

These recordings were originally issued on 78 rpm discs by Concert Hall in its "Limited Editions" series and were so well received that they have been made generally available on the present LP record.

The *Capricorn Concerto* is scored in concerto grosso form for flute, oboe, trumpet and strings and was written especially for the Saitenberg Little Symphony. It is written in the form of Bach's famous Brandenburg Concertos. Schuman's *Symphony for Strings* was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Foundation and was first performed by the Boston Symphony under Koussevitzky in the fall of 1943. It is considered one of Schuman's most successful compositions. Since its premiere it has been presented by many major symphony orchestras and was chosen as the representative American work for the festival held in London during the summer of 1946 by the International Society of Contemporary Music. Both compositions are fully described in the splendid notes that accompany this fine LP disc.

Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream, Op. 21 and 61—Incidental music. Soloists with the RIAS Chamber Choir and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8516) \$4.85.

Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream, Op. 21 and 61—Incidental music. Soloists with the Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6830) \$5.95.

This one clearly belongs to Decca, for the Vox disc is in no respect equal to it. The Vox disc is good, but that is not nearly enough for such sublimely beautiful music as *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Krauss is usually a dependable conductor; some of his recent recordings have been excellent, but he is far too heavy handed and stodgy with this delicate music. Furthermore, the Decca disc is somewhat better in reproduction and also includes the short March of the Fairies, which is left off of the other disc. Besides this number, each disc also has the Overture, Scherzo, Song of the Fairies (for two sopranos with choir), Intermezzo, Nocturne, Wedding March, Dance of the Clowns, and Melodrama and Finale. If we were to be banished to the proverbial desert isle with one piece of music only, we would very probably settle for *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The Berlin Philharmonic may always be expected to give a good performance and they do not disappoint this time; their playing outclasses the Vienna Symphony (note this is not the Philharmonic) in every respect. We prefer Krauss' tempo in the Wedding March to Fricsay's slightly slower idea of it, but again the orchestral playing is noticeably better by the Berliners.

We will undoubtedly be hearing a lot more about conductor Fricsay in the future. At the age of thirty-

six he is on the threshold of a great career according to all reports. At present conductor of Heinz Tietjen's Städtische Opera and the RIAS Symphony in Berlin, he got his big chance at the 1947 Salzburg Festival, when on short notice he pinch-hit for ailing Otto Klemperer in the premiere of a modern German opera. Judging by this disc alone, we would say he is well worth hearing again in other repertoire.

Those who have Rodzinski's recording of this suite will not gain too much by switching to either of the present ones. Unless Furtwängler ever records the complete suite, you may as well get the Fricsay version, for it is a fine one which will stand up to possible competitive ones, should any company venture still another edition of this music. S.

Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps (The Rite of Spring). L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-303) \$5.95.

This remarkable experiment in composition still has a stunning effect after many years, though its organization is found to be simpler than some of the early prophets liked to pretend. It is by no means head-aching to take in; its "plot" being simple, there are no difficulties in comprehending the course of events. There have been several celebrated interpreters of this colorful score. The most successful is generally conceded to be Stravinsky himself, whose recording for Columbia has never been surpassed. Its transference to LP was most successful, improving greatly on the original issue. This disc is still the finest performance of the music. Ansermet is justly famous the world over for his performances of Stravinsky's music, and his present recording is another masterpiece by this great conductor. It is not as great as Stravinsky's own recording only because it is not as barbaric and steely as the composer's, who is indeed a specialist in hard, rigid, taut music. For that reason he excels in this particular score. Actually Ansermet's performance is a more enjoyable listening experience and has more atmosphere, if of a less barbaric nature, than Stravinsky's. For some folks, therefore, the new Ansermet disc may be preferred. These new Suisse Romande Orchestra records, by the way, are mighty fine both for the excellence of the orchestra and for the genius of the recording engineers. There is little more to say, except that the choice of either the Stravinsky or the Ansermet LP's will be a safe one for a long time to come, because any future versions have little chance of bettering these. They are absolutely the tops. S.

Boyce: Eight Symphonies. Zimmler Sinfonietta. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-105) \$9.70.

The jewel-like perfection of these eight little symphonies—more properly "concerti grossi"—makes us wonder at the vagaries of time and public taste. William Boyce, successor to Henry Purcell in the musical life of England, has languished in obscurity for many years. It is only recently, through the efforts of

Constant Lambert, that he has been brought to public attention.

This is not a first recording, however. In January 1938 this publication reviewed a set of the *Symphonies*, then issued by Timely on nine 10-inch discs. Although the recording and the performance were satisfactory, we cannot imagine a comparison with this new release. The perfection of the Zimblet-Sinfonietta's musicianship cannot be improved upon. Incidentally, this group performs without benefit of conductor, although Josef Zimblet is its guiding spirit. A secondary, but by no means unimportant, advantage in this new set is the fact that the *Symphonies* are heard in continuity on the quietest surfaces it has been our pleasure to hear in some time.

Johann Strauss Dances. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay and the Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9507) \$5.85.

A Concert of Strauss. The New Symphony Orchestra and the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-212) \$4.95.

Waltzes of Johann and Josef Strauss. Bavarian Radio Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10022) \$4.85.

Four Favorite Johann Strauss Waltzes. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Rieger. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10024) \$4.85.

Recording companies never tire when it comes to releasing music by the Strausses—as witness the above and almost any back issue of THE NEW RECORDS. Even so, we never tire of listening to the Strausses, provided the music is presented to its best advantage. Of the four discs listed above, only one need be marked for special attention: Decca's presentation, via Deutsche Grammophon, is outstanding from both the recording and the performance angle.

Wolf-Ferrari: The Jewels of the Madonna—Dance of the Camorristi. One side, and **Lecuona: Malaguena.** Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-7" disc (♭V-49-1431) \$1.16.

Gottschalk: The Banjo. One side, and **Anderson: Jazz Legato and Anderson: Jazz Pizzicato.** Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-7" disc (♭V-40-1435) \$1.16.

The Boston Pops Orchestra is represented this month by five well-known selections from their repertory. As usual, the performances are rousing and well recorded.

CONCERTO



Bartók: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. Max Rostal (violin) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-302) \$5.95.

The appreciation of Bartók's music is growing rather steadily, and he is finally emerging as the great force that he truly is in this era. If Mozart and Schu-

bert were living today, we like to think that their gifts would not go unnoticed and they would not suffer a life of poverty; but that is what happened to Bartók in our own day. Recognition is coming soon after his death however, and the record catalogs attest to the growing understanding of his art. It is not an easy art to comprehend immediately. We do not profess fully to understand all of it, but one thing is certain—repetition helps a lot. We will not try to "sell" this music to anyone, but those who wish to become further acquainted with Bartók will find this disc of prime interest. Available for the first time on LP, this recording is a splendid achievement by the artists employed, and good technically.

Written in 1937-1938 on commission by violinist Zoltan Szekely, it is pervaded throughout by a distinctly Hungarian atmosphere rendered apparent to the listener not by means of original Magyar folk songs, but by a systematic use of the interval of a "fourth" as the basis both for its harmonic construction and structural development. The exposition of the first movement bears witness to the fact that dodecaphonic music can preserve a sense of both melody and tonality. Although the second subject consists of all the notes, presented in various order, of the whole-tone scale—thus differing from the usual "twelve-tone" music in which the order of the notes, once established, is never altered during a composition—the composer makes effective use of his theme in a series of melodic elaborations. The second movement, *Andante Tranquillo*, a masterpiece of subtle orchestration, consists mainly of six variations. The Finale is cast in a form similar to that of the first movement, more formal and orthodox. The program notes which accompany this disc will prove an aid in more quickly absorbing the music, for they explain its structure very clearly. We find it helpful to be conscious of such matters when listening to this music.

S.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 5 in E-flat for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 73 ("Emperor"). Rudolf Serkin (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-12" discs in album (C-MM-989) \$7.50. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54373) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 3 in C minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 37. Clara Haskil (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5057) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 2 in B-flat for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 19. Heinz Schröder (piano) with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra conducted by Hans Altmann. 1-10" disc (*ME-MG-15013) \$3.85.

In this case the last shall be first; we will consider the *Second* at the beginning because it is the easiest to dispose of. It is a thoroughly excellent job with a nicely phrased, lyrical piano part backed by good orchestral accompaniment. The reproduction is quite

good with fine balance. The competitive version by Kapell and Golschmann is too hard driven for our taste, accurate as it may be.

The lovely *Third Concerto* has seen better recordings than the present one by Clara Haskil, who plays with commendable accuracy but with a lack of that something which is commanding and convincing. It is just a lightweight effort, clearly overshadowed by all her competitors. Swoboda is not inspired by his soloist, offering a dutiful accompaniment, also lightweight. The reproduction is good. Competitive versions present something of a problem, for Backhaus and Böhm on London are not too well recorded whereas Arrau and Ormandy on Columbia are well recorded but a little angular and cold in performance. The Rubinstein and Toscanini broadcast performance recording is now on the Victor Treasury Series, reissued on LP. It is a highly polished, if somewhat hard reading of the work, with unresonant reproduction.

The *Emperor* has been treated to more really fine recordings than all the rest of the Beethoven concertos put together. Serkin's previously admired recording is here replaced with one which is the last word in recording technique. This time we have Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra accompanying, and they do a great job. Several other versions are exceptionally good, notably the Curzon and Szell set on London and the Schioler and Danish Orchestra set on Mercury. Schnabel with Stock and the Chicago Orchestra are now on LP in the Treasury Series. Our choice at the moment is for the new Serkin set; it is beautiful in sound and compelling in interpretation. We could call this trio of new releases, two hits and a miss, for No. 2 and No. 5 can be highly recommended. The next time we meet you with Beethoven concertos, we hope it will be with a new No. 4; there's only one on LP at present. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 17 in G for Piano and Orchestra, K. 453. Gaby Casadesus (piano) with the Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Eugene Bigot. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Menuetti, K. 176—Nos. 1 to 12.** Vox Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edvard Fendler. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6720) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 19 in F for Piano and Orchestra, K. 459. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 20 in D minor for Piano and Orchestra, K. 466.** Clara Haskil (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5054) \$5.95.

The LP catalogs now list fifteen different Mozart piano concertos in modern recordings. The present discs are included, for they bring two new ones to the list, Nos. 17 and 19. No. 20 was recently issued by Vox performed by Lili Kraus with Enrique Jorda conducting, and that version is superior to the present one by Clara Haskil. The Haskil performance of the No. 19 is very good; since No. 19 and No. 20 are each one side of a disc, this disc is an attractive bar-

gain. These two also offer nice contrast, from the familiar drama and emotion of the romantic No. 20 is quite different from the joy and vigor of the light-hearted No. 19. Swoboda is an able conductor of music of this period so his contribution is a worthy one. The reproduction is good.

No. 17 finds the distinguished Gaby Casadesus as soloist. She has always found favor in these columns for previous recordings, and the present one is no exception for this dependable artist. Her style for Mozart is a perfect match for her impeccable technique. No. 17 is a more modest work among Mozart piano concertos, rather intimate and charming in a delicate way. It depends therefore on subtlety of performance which Mme. Casadesus can offer in abundance. Her collaborator on the podium is in rapport with the soloist, making this a most enjoyable Mozart rendition. The reproduction is faithful if not overly resonant.

The second side filler of the Vox disc is devoted to Fendler's performances of Twelve Minuets K. 176. A recognized expert in Mozart, Fendler is always the sympathetic artist but never the interfering meddler. He exposes the music with affecting simplicity. Charming fare indeed. S.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 23. Clifford Curzon (piano) with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-276) \$5.95.

At this point, we look for one thing mainly in a performance of this work and that is a compromise between pyrotechnics and romantic coloring. A kind of sanity is necessary to keep this thing from being tortured too much. Some of the boys indulge in the purple patches excessively, and others put so much steely strength in it that in either case it is soon boring. For good taste, the present disc is the perfect compromise. Szell and Curzon are a great team, as we learned from their recording of the *Emperor Concerto*—it is said they share a tremendous enthusiasm for each other's re-creative art (maybe it's the "Z" in each name). Anyhow, when two great artists see eye to eye, the result is usually thrilling. The result is certainly thrilling here; in addition, it is gratifying to witness the justice done this music. The technique is there, the feeling is there, and the net result is both neat and accurate. London's reproduction is up to their usual high standard.

The competition on this item is, of course, formidable. There is the well known Rubinstein interpretation, with good accompaniment by Mitropoulos, which stresses the lyric qualities along with the heroic technical bravura. Victor has just reissued the Horowitz-Toscanini version in the Treasury series. This high voltage job is the last word in what can be done by using speed and uncompromising adherence to tempo and the letter of the score. Oscar Levant and Eugene Ormandy have interesting ideas along conventional lines about the work, and the Hansen-Mengelberg version is also in the running. If you

are buying this work for the solo artist's name, you will be pleased with what you get; but if you are out for a fine performance by whoever happens to offer it, the new Curzon-Szell disc will very likely be your final choice. It would be our recommendation at this time. S.

Pergolesi: Concerto in G for Flute and Orchestra. Raymond Meylan (flute) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Dahinden. One side, and **Haydn: Sonata in G for Flute and Piano.** René Le Roy (flute) and Paul Luyonnet (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1082) \$5.95.

This LP disc will be of interest to those persons who are interested in the flute. It contains two lovely selections each recorded by a famous exponent of his instrument—the French flutist, René Le Roy and his Swiss colleague, Raymond Meylan. The Haydn Sonata was originally pressed on 78 rpm discs and was released by Concert Hall in its "Limited Edition" series.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Sibelius: Quartet in D minor, Op. 56 ("Voces intimae"). Griller String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-304) \$5.95.

Bliss: Quartet No. 2 in F minor. Griller String Quartet. 1-10" disc (*L-LLP-299) \$4.95.

Mozart: Quintet in G minor, K. 516. Griller String Quartet and Max Gilbert (viola). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-132) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132. Griller String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-318) \$5.95.

We feel that each of the above discs merits special attention. However, owing to space limitations we must be brief. The Griller Quartet's sterling performances are well-known to any chamber music enthusiast and, with the variety displayed in the releases under discussion here, they cannot but make new friends. London *ffrr* has given music lovers what amounts to a short survey of chamber music during the last two hundred years—the Mozart work was composed in 1787 and the Bliss *Quartet* in 1950.

The Mozart *Quintet*, a strange mixture of tragic and exquisite melody, was written the year *Don Giovanni* was completed. This may account for the carry-over of some of the selfsame qualities evident in the opera. Beethoven's fifteenth quartet, composed over thirty-five years later, shows how one of the most original musicians of all time developed string music beyond its classic limitations. The only important chamber work of Sibelius (a product of his middle years), the *Quartet in D minor* stands as a searching autobiographical composition for four "voces intimae." They're all speaking from the inner Sibelius and give us something to listen to again and again. The final disc in our listing, Bliss' *Quartet No. 2*, is the most difficult of all to summarize; perhaps it is a little too close (in date of composition) to us to be

seen with any degree of perspective. It is an arresting work in the modern idiom, although its cacophonies are, to our ears at least, less nerve-racking than we had been led to expect. H.

Schumann: Andante and Variations in B-flat, Op. 46. Vera Appleton and Michael Field (duo-pianists), Ralph Oxman and Bebe Sarser (violincellos), and John Barrows (French horn). One side, and **Schubert: Moments Musicaux, Op. 94.** Leonard Shure (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-VLP-6050) \$5.95.

It is seldom that Schumann's *Andante and Variations* is heard in its original form for two pianos, two 'cellos and French horn. When it is was first performed there was difficulty in securing a proper balance between the instruments and Schumann recast it for two pianos. When this work is heard at all these days, it is in the revised scoring. Therefore the present recording has historical interest in addition to giving us some of Schumann's most nostalgic music. The reverse side of this LP disc contains an excellent recording of Schubert's *Six Moments Musicaux* by the fine American pianist, Leonard Shure.

Ives: Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano. Four sides, and **Sessions: Duo for Violin and Piano.** Patricia Travers (violin) and Otto Herz (piano). 4-12" discs in album (CMM-987) \$6.19. 1-10" disc (*CML-2169) \$4.

We recommend this brace of compositions to only the most hardy. Of the two, we found the Ives' composition the more interesting for, although both works "ramble" in the modern manner, his is easier to follow on the tour. Roger Sessions, whose *Symphony No. 2* made somewhat of a stir in recent months, has not added to his reputation with the *Duo for Violin and Piano*. Patricia Travers and Otto Herz perform this difficult music with noteworthy assurance. Reproduction—excellent.

Haydn: Sonata in G for Flute and Piano. René Le Roy (flute) and Paul Luyonnet (piano). One side, and **Pergolesi: Concerto in G for Flute and Orchestra.** Raymond Meylan (flute) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Dahinden. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1082) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

CHORAL



Debussy: Le Martyre de Saint-Sébastien. Frances Yeend, Miriam Stewart (sopranos); Anna Kaskas (contralto); with the Oklahoma City Symphony Choral and Orchestra conducted by Victor Alessandro. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-100) \$5.95.

Claude Debussy's *Le Martyre de Saint-Sébastien* is little known in this country, being overshadowed by two other works of his for voice and orchestra, *La Demoiselle Elue* and *Pélleas et Mélisande*. Written in 1911 to one of Gabriele D'Annunzio's highly perfumed and sensuous plays, the music is full of new

ideas and although it is Debussy's last composition in this form, it gives a clear indication of the path Debussy might have trod had he not been harassed by illness and doubts.

The play and music were poorly received at the *première*, there having been a hickle-hackle with the Church over D'Annunzio's treatment of the story of Saint-Sébastien. It was thought decidedly pagan in atmosphere and, as the Archbishop of Paris put it, "offensive to Christian consciences." The fact that the work had been commissioned by the dancer Ida Rubenstein also mitigated against its success. Time has not dealt too gently with the music, which fact makes Allegro's enterprise the more interesting to modern ears, since it is now possible to hear and judge the work with more perspective.

The plan of the work can be outlined simply, as follows. Each act (and there are five of them) is introduced by a prelude; there are choral passages interspersed freely throughout the score, and to these are added divine commentaries sung by single celestial voices. The music is esoteric and exotic, not for all tastes but worthy of investigation—especially by those whose musical palates may have become somewhat jaded.

Mmes. Yeend, Stewart and Kaskas, the Oklahoma City Symphony Choral and Orchestra under Victor Alessandro deserve the highest praise for the care and preparation that have gone into the making of this recording. The performance has imagination plus a care for style that is in keeping with the decidedly Eastern influences apparent in the words and music.

Allegro's recording is excellent; there are copious notes and a complete text. W.

Byrd: Mass for Three Voices. One side, and Byrd: **Mass for Four Voices.** Choral Society of London directed by John Bath. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-101). \$5.95.

A short while ago (TNR March '51) London Records released a recording of Byrd's *Mass for Four Voices*. Allegro counters with not only the *Mass for Four Voices* but also the *Mass for Three Voices*, recording both on a twelve inch LP disc.

Both *Masses* follow the usual pattern of *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei* and have a solemn, almost unearthly beauty. Byrd was a master of polyphony and his music shows an harmonic daring and vigor quite unusual in the music of his time. There is a spirit about the music, a courageous spirit—and there is also faith and submission—a unique combination of values that are resolved and blended in masterly fashion.

The Choral Society of London, the jacket notes state, is a small group of singers chosen from members of choral groups who specialize in music of the Polyphonic Period. Be this as it may, they sing with uncommon beauty and have a surpassing ability to project the mood of this music. Much of the credit undoubtedly accrues to John Bath, the young con-

ductor of the ensemble. His choice of *tempi* and dynamics are those of a sensitive and trained musician.

The recording, made in England, is excellent throughout and, with two Byrd *Masses* for only one dollar more than the London recording, this disc immediately enters the "best buy" category. Highly recommended. W.

Palestrina: Missa Papae Marcelli. Saint Eustache Choir (Paris) directed by Emile Martin. 1-12" disc (*VX-PTL-6790) \$5.95.

Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli* is one of the most famous of all *Masses*. The story of Pope Marcellus' dictum requiring liturgical music to be purged of all secular feeling and ornamentation is well known and Palestrina has been hailed as the man who "saved" music. This *Mass* was first performed at the Sistine Chapel on 27 April 1565 and thus is nearly 400 years old. Like all great music, it seems as alive today as it certainly was then. There is a ruggedness and grandeur about it that is both wholesome and refreshing. Devotional it certainly is, but there is also a well defined sensuousness in the emotional make-up of the work that is characteristic of most Italian music and all good music.

This is as it should be, and the St. Eustache Choir directed by Emil Martin loses no opportunity to indulge in the sheer beauty of the "sound." Theirs is an inspired performance, tonally accurate and dynamically interesting. The text, which follows the Catholic *Missal*, is expressively sung, giving an overall effect that is always musical and, on more than one occasion, thrilling.

The recording is a model for this type of music. Obviously made in a large auditorium (most likely the church itself), there is just enough echo to lend authenticity and realism to the performance. Quiet surfaces and intelligent notes round out one of the finest choral offerings to date. W.

Brahms: Choral Songs. (Sung in English and German.) Philadelphia Choral Ensemble directed by James Fleetwood. 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-92) \$5.45.

Brahms: Part-Songs for Mixed Chorus, Op. 104. One side, and **Verdi: Stabat Mater** (No. 2 of "Four Sacred Pieces"). (Sung in Latin.) Bavarian Radio Choir and Orchestra conducted by Joseph Kugler. 1-10" disc (*ME-MG-15011) \$3.85.

The *Ten Folk Songs* here recorded are part of a set of twenty-six such songs in which Brahms plays the part of arranger rather than composer. They are all very beautiful—sentimental as one might expect and very tastefully transcribed for unaccompanied mixed chorus. Among the most outstanding are *In the Night; I'd enter your garden*; and *How sad flows the stream*. The English translations are good and amazingly enunciated—they are actually understandable. The *Five Songs* (Op. 104) are to be numbered among Brahms' finest choral works, especially the two *Nacht wache* songs, the second of which was sung at Brahms' funeral. This excellent LP disc concludes with a first

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
 ♣ indicates 45 rpm.

recording of *Darthulas Grabgesang*, a very moving lament based on a lyric by the early poet, Ossian. In all these varied works the Philadelphic Choral Ensemble under its founder, James Fleetwood, sings with enviable purity of tone and, as mentioned above, virtually perfect diction. The recording is excellent.

A duplication of four of the *Five Songs* (Op. 104) is presented by the Bavarian Radio Choir under Josef Kugler. There is little to choose from artistically, but technically the Philadelphia Choral Ensemble fares better. The over side offers a first recording of a little known work by Verdi—a *Stabat Mater*, the second of *Quattro pezzi sacri*—written during and after the composition of *Falstaff*. They are his last completed compositions. The *Stabat Mater* is real Verdi being somewhat operatic in character, with echos of the *Requiem*. It depicts the scene wherein Mary watches and shares the agony of her Son upon the cross. It is a masterly work and makes one wish for a recording of the other three pieces.

Technically this Mercury record is not up to present day standards, but the *Stabat Mater* is not too poor, improving as the disc gets under way. W.

OPERA



Offenbach: Les Contes d'Hoffmann (complete).

(Sung in English). Margherita Grandi, Dorothy Bond, Ann Ayars (sopranos); Monica Sinclair (mezzo-soprano); Robert Rounseville, Graham Clifford (tenors); Bruce Dargavel (baritone); with the Sadler's Wells Chorus and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLPA-4) \$17.85.

Offenbach's fantastic *Tales of Hoffmann* makes its second appearance on LP discs this month and overshadows the Columbia version (TNR Mar. '50) both artistically and technically. From the opening bars of the Prologue to the final chord of the Epilogue this performance sparkles, has verve and style, and is replete with imagination and fantasy.

Rossini once referred to Offenbach as "the Mozart of the Champs-Élysées" and a more fitting description would be difficult to find. As might be expected, then, *Hoffmann* is brimming over with tunes, graceful melodies that have character and spirit. The music is good theatre and has, from its *première* on 10 February 1881 to the present time, been a prime favorite. As so often happens with a popular opera, however, singers and conductor alike get into a rut, routine performances become the order of the day, and it remains for an interested musician to re-study the work and present it anew. When the interested party is Sir Thomas Beecham the results are always revealing, invigorating and novel.

The singers in this recording are, without exception, all extremely capable. Top honors go to Margherita Grandi. This is understandable, for she is obviously the most experienced and most gifted singer in the

cast. Her *Barcarolle* is a tremendous affair, indescribable in its sensuous beauty. Dorothy Bond as Olympia, the Mechanical Doll, displays a fine high coloratura, amazingly accurate and always clean and pure in tone. Ann Ayres, the Antonia, sings with distinction and sure dramatic instinct, revealing a lyric soprano of uncommon beauty. The men are equally fine. Bruce Dargavel sings the three roles of Coppeius, Dappertutto and Dr. Miracle. In each his rich baritone is heard effectively, the high spot being the Diamond Aria in the second act. Robert Rounseville is Hoffmann and throughout the taxing role maintains a degree of artistry that is as exceptional as it is satisfying.

Welding all these diverse parts into a perfect ensemble was the task of Sir Thomas Beecham. Hoffmann has long been a favorite of his, and his love for the score is apparent in every bar. The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (also his own creation) responds to every mood; they play perfectly. Sir Thomas realizes all the drama and tragedy (for Hoffmann is not a humorous opera—it is fantasy compounded of equal parts of comedy and tragedy) of Offenbach's incomparable score.

The set is well nigh perfect. A serious oversight, however, is the failure of London Records to provide a libretto. To be sure, the opera is sung in English (and good English too, approximately 75% of it is intelligible), but to follow the plot a libretto is necessary; at this price one should have been included. The recording is excellent, both musically and mechanically making for a superb phonographic treat. W.

Haydn: Orfeo ed Euridice (complete). (Sung in

Italian). Judith Hellwig, Hedda Heusser (sopranos); Herbert Handt, Richard Wadleigh (tenors); Alfred Poell (bass-baritone); Walter Berry (basso); with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 3-12" discs in album (*HS-HSLP-2029) \$17.85.

It is seldom that one has an opportunity to own a world *première* on records, but that is just what the Haydn Society offers in its current release of Josef Haydn's opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*. Long thought to have been left unfinished, Haydn Society scholars found portions of the score in Berlin and Budapest and pieced them together to present the first performance and recording of this music.

Orfeo was commissioned by the Prince of Wales, in 1791, but political difficulties prevented its performance. Haydn was paid, but the work was on too large a scale for the Esterhazys (and besides Haydn was no longer active in their service), so it was forgotten. The Haydn Society has done music lovers an inestimable service in restoring and recording the work, for it ranks with the Mozart operas among the landmarks of 18th century operatic history.

In form, *Orfeo ed Euridice* harks back to *opera seria*; the arias are static and formal, the recitative

carrying the burden of the action, and the chorus is quite prominent. What most *opera seria* lack, however, this work has in abundance—vitality. The music is often dramatic, always tuneful; and the orchestration very advanced for the times. The whole treatment of the subject, in fact, reminds one very much (without being in any sense derivative) of *Don Giovanni*. The same sense of the theatre, drive and grand style are evident here. There is no humor—this being one of the weak points of *opera seria* libretti.

The cast is made up of young singers who are rapidly becoming familiar through the medium of records. Judith Hellwig, as Euridice, is uniformly excellent and turns in an outstanding performance. Her singing of the moving death scene *Del mio core* is magnificent! This music can only be compared to Purcell's famous *When I am laid in Earth* from "Dido and Aeneas." Herbert Handt, as Orfeo, covers himself with glory. The role is difficult; the music does not lie easily for present day tenors whose range is inclined to be somewhat limited, but Mr. Handt has obviously studied and trained for the part and leaves nothing to be desired. The role of Creonte is in the capable hands of the versatile Alfred Poell. His large voice is eminently suited to the music and the vengeance air *Mai non fia inulto* is thrillingly sung. Others in the cast are well equipped and add greatly to the general ensemble. No weak members in this performance!

Dr. Hans Swarowsky directs this music with authority and loving care. Much of the credit for the success of the recording undoubtedly accrues to him. His choice of tempi, dynamics and phrasing are all stylistically sound, and the result is a performance that is both good theatre and good music. The brochure prepared for the set is the work of Helmut Wirth and is the most comprehensive set of notes ever compiled for an album of phonograph records. It is, in fact, a book; and in its eighty-four pages are discussed (1) all the Haydn operas in general (2) *Orfeo ed Euridice* in particular (3) sources of the score (4) eight full page illustrations and numerous musical examples and (5) a complete English-Italian libretto!

You are urged to investigate this set for, beyond a doubt, it will be considered in years to come as one of the greatest contributions to the phonograph has ever made to musical art. In it, recorded music comes of age. W.

Rossini: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Renata Broilo (soprano); Giulietta Simionato (mezzo-soprano); Luigi Infantino (tenor); Giuseppe Taddei, Mario Mangili (baritones); Carlo Badioli, Antonio Cassinelli, Piero Poldi (bassos); with the EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Fernando Previtali. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1211) \$17.85.

In preparing for this recording of Rossini's immortal *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Cetra assembled one of its strongest casts and assigned Fernando Previtali as

conductor, thus assuring results that are artistically and musically of the highest order. With a work as popular as this there is a tendency to cut corners, but no such chicanery is evident here. The entire performance is replete with beautiful voices, and strict adherence to Rossini's intentions is apparent. By assigning the role of Rosina to a mezzo-soprano, in the use of the aria *A un dottore della mia sorte* and by including an aria from *L'Inutile Precauzione* in the lesson scene, Cetra follows, as closely as possible, the original score, and these features will be new to most American listeners.

Giuseppe Taddei, as the Barber, turns in a praise-worthy performance. His conception of the role is refreshing—here is no clown, but the sagacious and scheming hero of Beaumarchais' play. Luigi Infantino sings with wonderful ease, a fine sense of *bel canto* and is also very much in character. The Basilio (Antonio Cassinelli) and Dr. Bartolo (Carlo Badioli) are also top-flight, equally good in the comic moments as in their arias, Badioli being the slightly less gifted vocally. Special praise must be given Sgra. Simionato. Her Rosina sparkles and is notable for a sophisticated ingenuousness quite unique among operatic *prime donne*.

Maestro Previtali's distinguished direction brings out all the glitter and bustle of Rossini's inimitable score. Much of the foolishness and all of the nonsense usually expected in a performance of *Il Barbiere* have been eliminated, to the immense benefit of all concerned. The Orchestra and Chorus of Radio Italiana play and sing with true Italian fervor, underlining the dramatic episodes and emphasizing the quality and differentiation of the various numbers.

The recording is the best Cetra has accomplished to date, being uniform in quality and above average mechanically. Highly recommended. W.

Mozart: *Don Giovanni*, K. 527 (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Gertrude Grob-Prandl, Hilde Konetzni, Hedda Heusser (sopranos); Herbert Handt (tenor); Mariano Stabile, Alfred Poell (baritones); Alois Fernerstorfer, Oskar von Czerwenka (bassos); with the Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 4-12" discs in album (*HS-HSLP-2030) \$23.80.

Recording a major musical work is always a difficult undertaking, and when the work in question is *Don Giovanni*, troubles and problems arise frequently. When an opera is known and loved by many people, it is far from easy to cast and difficult to produce, it is therefore small wonder that in nearly all performances there is a worm in the apple—a chip out of the edge.

It must be stated at the outset that the Haydn Society has done only a fair job with this, perhaps the greatest of all operas. The cast, headed by the veteran baritone Mariano Stabile, is competent, but in no way exceptional. Sgr. Stabile is well and favorably known to record collectors but it becomes apparent at once

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
 Ⓞ indicates 45 rpm.

that his voice has lost much of its charm with the passing years. Then too, he seems miscast as the Don for his performance is strangely wooden and lacks subtlety. The Leporello of Alois Pernerstorfer falls in the same category; he too misses the point and also does not seem in the best of voice. Herbert Handt, as Ottavio, sings with considerable beauty of voice if with a certain lack of warmth. Alfred Poell is miscast as Masetto—he should have been Don Giovanni, for his voice has all the dignity and expressiveness Stabile's lacks. He is much too fine an artist to relegate to the minor role of a country bumpkin.

The ladies also disappoint to a certain extent. Gertrude Grob-Prandl is not at home in the tremendously difficult role of Donna Anna—the music frequently defeats her. Hilde Konetzni is the best as Donna Elvira. Vocally capable, she also seems able to get inside the role to a greater extent than any of her colleagues. The Zerlina of Hedda Heusser is youthful, girlish and generally competent.

The Haydn Society, in accordance with its high artistic standards (among the highest in the phonograph industry) has followed closely the plan of the original Prague performance, and the arias *Dalla sua pace* and *Mi tradi quell'alma ingrata*, added for the Vienna premiere, are omitted but have been recorded on the eighth side of the set. In addition they have supplied notes on the opera by the eminent musicologist and Mozart scholar, Dr. Alfred Einstein. His views on *Don Giovanni* are not the usual ones and consequently are extremely interesting as well as informative. The recording, while good, is not up to the high standards of some of their previous issues. W.

Verdi: Highlights from "Don Carlos." (Sung in Italian). Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano); Jussi Bjoerling (tenor); Robert Merrill (baritone); Italo Tajo (basso); with chorus and orchestra. 4-7" discs (øV-WDM-1495) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1128) \$5.72.

The revival of *Don Carlos* at the Metropolitan this season has been hailed by public and critics alike. In presenting this record of "Highlights," RCA-Victor has included much of the memorable score. The disc begins with the tenor aria *Io l'ho perduta*, followed by the duet *Dio che nell'alma infondere*. Next comes the *Canzone de Velo* and the aria *Ella giammai m'amo*. The other side includes the most famous aria from the opera *O don fatale* and the death of Rodrigo *Per me giunto*.

Jussi Bjoerling and Robert Merrill, as Carlos and Rodrigo respectively, were members of this season's production at the Metropolitan, and they are in fine voice for this recording. The opening aria and duet are sung with excellent sense of style and, gratifyingly enough, with unwonted fervor and expression. Mr. Merrill is also in top form for the *Morte di Rodrigo* (*Per me giunto*). Miss Thebom, who recorded her arias in England, does a surprisingly fine job with the exotic *Canzone de Velo* and is superb in the difficult *O don fatale*. It is a disappointment to report

that Italo Tajo is poor in his big aria *Ella giammai m'amo*. The aria is taxing, and although he is capable vocally, his performance is marred by mannerisms supposed, one assumes, to portray emotion with a capital "E." The result is one that can best be described as pure Smithfield.

It is a pity that RCA did not feel more generous or they might have included Margherita Grandi's superb performance of *Tu che le vanità*. There is room on side two for it. This and the substitution of Boris Christoff's incredible recording of *Ella giammai m'amo* would have made these Highlights a real treasure. But perhaps, to look at the enterprise in a charitable light, technical difficulties supervened.

One other disappointment must be recorded—the notes are sparse and the words of the arias are not given. Surely it is not asking too much to have this service, for it adds to the enjoyment of the listener and conceivably might bring him back for more!

The recording is fine throughout and the three conductors Cellini (for Bjoerling and Merrill), Braithwaite (Miss Thebom) and Morel (Tajo) are all capable and at ease with the music. W.

Giuseppe de Luca Sings. Giuseppe de Luca (baritone) with piano accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*GOLDEN AGE-GAR-100) \$5.95.

Alessandro Bonci Sings. Alessandro Bonci (tenor) with piano accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*GOLDEN AGE-GAR-101) \$5.95.

Giuseppe de Luca and Alessandro Bonci have been added to the rapidly growing list of singers of the past made available on LP discs. Both collections were made when these artists were in their prime: De Luca's were from his La Scala period (1903-1911) and Bonci's were made about 1905.

The selections representing De Luca are from *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Don Pasquale*, *Hamlet* and *Dinorah*. Bonci's disc contains arias from *La Favorita*, *Don Pasquale*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *I Puritani* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.

Owing to the age of the original recordings, there is, as the manufacturer states "slight surface noise (which) could not be eliminated without impairing the timbre of the voice and taking away its bloom." We are sure that those of our readers who are interested in these historic discs will find this factor negligible.

Puccini: Suor Angelica (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Rosanna Carteri, Wanda Strappo, Gilda Capozzi, Carla Pozzi (sopranos); Marta Solaro, Amelita Minniti, Lia Ceri (mezzo-sopranos); Miti Truccato Pace (contralto); with the EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Fernando Previtali. 1-12" disc (*CE-50030) \$5.95.

With the release of *Suor Angelica*, Cetra completes its set of Puccini's *Il Trittico*, the other two one-act operas, *Il Tabarro* and *Gianni Schicchi*, having been released last year (TNR July '50).

Suor Angelica (Sister Angelica) will, in all prob-

ability, be new to most American opera lovers, since its last performance at the Metropolitan was in the season 1920-21. It is unique among operas in that its large cast consists entirely of women. The story is the somewhat sentimental one of a nun with an unhappy past. Puccini had an especial fondness for this exquisitely delicate, mystical libretto and wrote music for it that is characteristic and revealing.

The title role is sung by Rosanna Carteri, a lyric soprano of distinction. Her phrasing and general musicianship are outstanding and she turns in a performance that is vivid and convincing. Miti Truccato Pace, as her aunt, the Princess, is properly dark-voiced and imperial. Among the others, Marta Solaro and Wanda Strappo as La Badessa and Suor Genovieffa, respectively, give above average characterizations.

The presentation and recording are full of atmosphere, both musically and dramatically, with the high spot properly being found in the finale, when the best known aria *Senza Mama, bimbo, tu sei morta!* is movingly sung by Sgra. Carteri. From here the music and plot move inexorably to the tragic death and final salvation of the unhappy Angelica.

The entire performance is a worthy one and the fine hand of Fernando Previtali is very much in evidence. All in all, it is difficult to understand the neglect into which the work has fallen. The recording and surfaces are generally good. W.

Massenet: Manon—Adieu, notre petite table (Act II). (Sung in French). One side, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Porgi amor (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Victoria de los Angeles (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 1-12 disc (V-12-3227) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3227) \$1.16.

Wagner: Tannhäuser—Dich, teure Halle (Act II). One side, and **Wagner: Lohengrin**—Elsas Traum: Einsam in trüben Tagen. (Sung in German). Victoria de los Angeles (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (V-12-3213) \$1.31 1-7" disc (øV-49-3213) \$1.16.

Victoria de los Angeles, who has already created a following through her HMV discs, is presented domestically for the first time with these selections. Her rich, expressive soprano conveys such depth of feeling in these arias that only in hearing her sing them in concert could we feel any "closer" to a fine performance. The orchestral accompaniments are excellently balanced with the voice.

Mozart: Highlights from "Cosi Fan Tutte," K. 588. (Sung in Italian). Sena Jurinac (soprano); Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano); Richard Lewis (tenor); Eric Kunz and Mario Borriello (baritones); with the Glyndebourne Festival Orchestra conducted by Fritz Busch. 6-12" discs in album (V-DM-1500) \$8.89. 6-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1500) \$7.44. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1126) \$5.72.

Cosi Fan Tutte is the least known of Mozart's

great triumvirate of "Italian" operas. It was first produced in Vienna on 26 January 1790 and did not reach the Metropolitan until 24 March 1922! The time lapse is significant for this, the most *buffa* of all Mozart's *opere buffe*, has been tinkered with and denounced all because of the libretto. The chief complaint seems to be the frivolity of the subject, to wit: the inconstancy and frailty of women. Beethoven was scandalized, Wagner felt it was poor stuff (significant that neither of these men was notable for a sense of humor) and so on down the line. This, however, is neither the time nor the place to discuss operatic libretti—suffice it to say that Mozart wrote some of his most glorious music for this maligned book (Alfred Einstein calls the opera "... iridescent, like a glorious soap-bubble, with the colors of buffoonery, parody, and both genuine and simulated emotion.") and if the plot were as weak and foolish as many claim it to be, this would not have been possible.

Included on this LP disc are: the Introduction *La mia Dorabella*; the scene *Scioccherie di poeti*; the duet *Ah guarda sorella*; the aria *Come scegli!*; the duet *Prendero quel brunettino*; another duet *Il core vi dono*; the aria *Per pietà, ben mio*; and the duet *Fra gli amplessi*. This is a fine cross section of the opera and, while one could complain at certain omissions, it would be carping as well as futile. The soloists, as one might expect, this being a Glyndebourne Festival performance, are all excellent. Sena Jurinac and Blanche Thebom are the bedeviled ladies and they sing with understanding and artistry. As their lovers, Richard Lewis and Eric Kunz turn in convincing and well considered performances. As the cynical Don Alfonso, Mario Borriello leaves nothing to be desired. Fritz Busch and the Festival Orchestra play with polish and due regard for style, thus insuring an authentic performance.

Those who own the old 1935 version issued by RCA (DM-812/14) will be interested in comparing the performances; those to whom *Cosi Fan Tutte* is new are urged to investigate—it will be worth while. W.

The Great Caruso. Mario Lanza (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Constantine Callinicos. 4-12" discs in album (V-DM-1506) \$6.29. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1506) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1127) \$5.72.

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana—Addio alla madre. One side, and **Verdi: La Forza del Destino**—O tu che in seno agli angeli (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Mario Lanza (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Constantine Callinicos. 1-12" disc (V-12-3209) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3209) \$1.16.

What with appearing in movies and touring the country in concert, we are amazed that Mario Lanza has found the time to record all the selections that are coming our way these days.

In "The Great Caruso" album, Mr. Lanza sings *Questa o quella, La donna è mobile, and Parmi veder*

le lagrime from "Rigoletto;" *Recondita armonia* and *E lucevan le stelle* from "La Tosca;" *Una furtiva lagrima* from "L'Elisir d'Amore;" *Cielo e mar!* from "La Gioconda;" and *Vesti la giubba* from "I Pagliacci."

Mario Lanza's robust tenor is not yet a threat to the memory of the late Caruso, but his popularity is phenomenal, if record-breaking concert and movie attendance and phonograph records sales are any indication.

VOCAL



Brahms: Lieder. Alfred Poell (basso) accompanied by Victor Graef (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5053) \$5.95.

Brahms: Songs for Alto, Viola and Piano, Op. 91. Lorna Sydney (mezzo-soprano) with Emil Morawetz (viola), and Wilhelm Loibner (piano). And **Brahms: Nachtigall, Op. 97, No. 1** and **Brahms: Des liebsten Schwur, Op. 69, No. 4.** One side, and **Schumann: Liederkreis, Op. 39.** Lorna Sydney (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Wilhelm Loibner (piano). 1-12" disc (*VANGUARD-VRS-411) \$5.95.

Two very fine LP discs devoted to German *lieder* make their appearance this month. Brahms is the favored composer, with slightly less than three and a half sides being taken up with his songs.

Alfred Poell is rapidly coming to the fore as one of the finest *lieder* singers of the present day and also as one of the most indefatigable recording artists. Many more such artists could be accommodated for he brings to each task, regardless of stylistic differences, musicianship of a rare order and an overall artistry that assures the prospective purchaser an enjoyable and instructive performance. The sixteen songs comprising his Brahms recital have been heard on records before by such varied singers as Kipnis, Lehmann and Schlusnus, but Herr Poell easily maintains the high level set by his predecessors. Included are such favorites as *Feldeinsamkeit*; *Sapphische Ode*; *Nachtigall*; and the lovely *Sonntag*. Among the lesser known songs are *Dein blaues Augen* and *Der Ganz zum Liebchen*. Deft accompaniments are supplied by Victor Graef.

Schumann's *Liederkreis*, a setting of twelve poems by Eichendorff, makes its first appearance on LP, and it is a notable one. Lorna Sydney, a young Australian mezzo, sings these romantic songs with fine regard for atmosphere and text. Particularly moving are *In der Fremde*, *Mondnacht* and *Schöne Fremde*. The concluding portion of this disc is given over to the Op. 91 songs for alto, viola and piano, *Gestille Sehnsucht* and *Geistliches Wiegenlied* wherein Miss Sydney, aided by Emil Morawetz (viola), turns in an exquisite performance. Fine singing also features the remaining Brahms works, *Nachtigall* and *Des liebsten Schwur*, the latter being, as far as this reviewer can determine, new to records.

The recording on both discs leaves nothing to be desired. Westminster supplies excellent notes on Brahms *lieder* and includes a booklet giving the text and translation of all the songs. Vanguard content themselves with supplying the texts and translations only. W.

Barber: Knoxville: "Summer of 1915," Op. 24. Eleanor Steber (soprano) with the Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra conducted by William Strickland. One side, and **Barber: Four Excursions, Op. 20.** Rudolf Firkusny (piano). 1-10" disc (*CML-2174) \$4.

Knoxville: "Summer of 1915" was commissioned by Eleanor Steber and first performed by her with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1948. There is a general mood about the work that most certainly evokes the time, the place, and the season. Nostalgic, misty, and dreamlike, it is difficult to place in offering a criticism of it. To some listeners it will bring back days they have experienced (the text is from an autobiographical essay by James Agee and is printed on the cover); to others it will be a meaningless, meandering composition of small import. *Four Excursions*, which bear no further title by way of explanation, are evidently Mr. Barber's impressions of journeys into the folkways of America. Regional characteristics are skillfully employed in these novel piano pieces.

Romantic Moments. Jeanette MacDonald (soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Robert Russell Bennett. 3-10" discs in album (V-DM-1489) \$4.50. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1489) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-62) \$4.67.

Miss MacDonald, now touring in Molnar's "The Guardsman" with her husband Gene Raymond, includes in her latest album some of the selections she sings in her role in that play. The collection includes: Victor Herbert's *Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life* and *When You're Away*; Sigmund Romberg's *Will You Remember?* and *One Alone*; Lenoir's *Parlez Moi d'Amour*; and *San Francisco* from one of her earlier motion picture successes of the same name.

Toselli: Serenade. One side, and **Drigo: Serenade.** (Sung in Italian). Mario Lanza (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Constantine Callinicos. 1-12" disc (V-12-3155) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3155) \$1.16.

d'Hardelot: Because. One side, and **Geehl: For You Alone.** Mario Lanza (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Constantine Callinicos. 1-10" disc (V-10-3207) \$1.16. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3207) \$1.16.

Grieg: I Love Thee, Op. 5, No. 3. One side, and **Belby: My Song, My Love.** Mario Lanza (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Ray Sinatra. 1-10" disc (V-10-3208) \$1.16. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3208) \$1.16.

Three more discs have been added to the already

formidable collection of Mario Lanza records. These are light selections of the ever-popular variety sung pleasantly with good orchestral accompaniment.

Haskiveinu (Traditional). One side, and **Oneo Bechoach** (Traditional). (Sung in Hebrew). Cantor Moshe Kusevitsky (tenor) accompanied by Abe Ellstein (organ). 1-12" disc (V-12-3210) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3210) \$1.16.

Adoshem Moloch (Traditional). One side, and **Retzei Vimnuchoseinu** (Traditional). (Sung in Hebrew). Cantor Moshe Kusevitsky (tenor) accompanied by Abe Ellstein (organ). 1-12" disc (V-12-3211) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3211) \$1.16.

The renowned cantor, Moshe Kusevitsky, has recorded four selections of traditional Hebrew music, taken from the liturgy. This is age-old, profound religious music, sung with great solemnity by the cantor, and music which has an artistic appeal above and beyond its sacred associations.

Weill: September Song. One side, and **Kern: Yesterdays**. Ezio Pinza (basso) with orchestra conducted by Johnny Green. 1-10" disc (V-10-3256) \$1.16. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3256) \$1.16.

Ezio Pinza's first appearance on RCA-Victor discs in some years presents him singing hits from past musical shows. In spite of Mr. Pinza's reputation and talent, we wish he would refrain from booming the lyrics of inoffensive little popular tunes, and stick to opera.

Rota: Take the Sun (from the film "The Glass Mountain"). (Sung in English). Tito Gobbi (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Philip Green. One side, and **Pigarelli: Song of the Mountain** (from the film "The Glass Mountain"). (Sung in Italian). Tito Gobbi (baritone) with accordion and guitar accompaniment. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1940) \$1.32.

Tito Gobbi fans in this country may or may not be particularly interested in this new record. The selections, both of which are from his recent European movie "The Glass Mountain," will have little appeal for opera lovers. It is reported that this little HMV disc is a best seller in England, but we doubt whether its sale in this country will be more than fair.

Turina: Cantares (No. 3 of "Poema en forma de canciones"). One side, and **Turina: Saeta**. (Sung in Spanish). Victoria de los Angeles (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1929) \$1.32.

The records that have been made available of the great Spanish soprano, Victoria de los Angeles, have enjoyed wide acclaim in this country. Therefore a new one has a ready market awaiting it. Thus it is only necessary to list it and state that the reproduction is highly satisfactory.

PIANO



Scarlatti: Sonatas. Kathleen Long (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-314) \$4.95.

Kathleen Long play Faure. Kathleen Long (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-246) \$4.95.

Schumann Recital. Kathleen Long (piano). 1-12" (*L-LLP-188) \$5.95.

The distinguished English pianist, Kathleen Long, has gained a great host of admirers on this side of the Atlantic, largely through the many recordings she has made. Many of them have had very substantial sales in the U.S.A. This month London makes available three LP discs by this splendid artist. They represent Miss Long at her best in a wide variety of selections and London has seen to it that she is given excellent piano reproduction on discs with absolutely quiet surfaces.

For the record here are the selections to be found on each disc. The Scarlatti Sonatas are Longo Numbers 14, 45, 46, 119, 129, 209, 256, and 265. The Fauré pieces are: *Impromptu No. 2 in F minor*, Op. 31; *Nocturne No. 6 in D-flat major*, Op. 63; *Nocturne No. 13 in B minor*, Op. 119; and *Barcarolle No. 2 in G minor*, Op. 41. The Schumann disc contains: *Sonata No. 2 in G minor*, Op. 22; *Novelette in D major*, Op. 21, No. 2; *Romance in F-sharp major*, Op. 28, No. 2; and *Novelette in F-sharp minor*, Op. 21, No. 8.

Ravel: Bolero. Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (V-12-3226) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3226) \$1.16.

Enesco: Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A, Op. 11. Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists). 1-7" disc (øV-49-1452) \$1.16.

Saint-Saëns: Danse Macabre, Op. 40. Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (V-12-3205) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3205) \$1.16.

Compositions originally intended for two pianos are rarer than those for other combinations. As a consequence, Whittemore and Lowe have made an arrangement of *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1* to fit their medium. They also present Ravel's own two-piano arrangement of his *Bolero* and Saint-Saëns' *Danse Macabre*. All the above are rendered with full regard for the color and variety that may be obtained from four hands at two keyboards.

MacDowell: Piano Music. John Kirkpatrick (piano). 7-10" discs in album (C-MM-988) \$8.80. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54372) \$5.45.

This recording by the distinguished American pianist, John Kirkpatrick, contains *Woodland Sketches* complete, three movements from *Sea Pieces*, three from *Fireside Tales*, and four from *New England Idyls*, all by the American composer, Edward MacDowell (1861-1908). This is music for the quiet hour

and most of it is delightfully tuneless in the style of *To a Wild Rose* and *To a Water Lily*—two of the selections from *Woodland Sketches*. Mr. Kirkpatrick is certainly in full sympathy with MacDowell and presents his music as we are sure he would wish it rendered. Excellent piano reproduction throughout.

Debussy: The Children's Corner Suite—Jimbo's Lullaby. One side, and **Debussy: The Children's Corner Suite**—The Little Shepherd; Golliwog's Cakewalk. William Kapell (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-3212) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3212) \$1.16.

Although nearly every month brings another rendition of *The Children's Corner Suite*, we always welcome a sensitive performance of this seemingly simple work. William Kapell does not play the entire suite, however. We have no idea why he didn't complete the job; he was doing nicely as far as he went.

Falla: El Amor Brujo—Danza ritual del fuego (Ritual fire dance). One side, and **Falla: El Amor Brujo**—Danza del terror. José Iturbi (piano). 1-7" disc (øV-49-1427) \$1.16.

Beethoven: Bagatelle in A minor ("Für Elise"). One side, and **Debussy: Rêverie**. José Iturbi (piano). 1-7" disc (øV-49-1424) \$1.16.

José Iturbi presents on 45 rpm discs four selections for which he is justly famous. *Rêverie* and *Für Elise* have long been strangers to present-day record lists; we welcome their return.

Ballantine: Variations for Piano on "Mary Had a Little Lamb" Edward Ballantine (piano). 1-12" disc (*FESTIVAL-FLP-70-201) \$5.45.

Edward Ballantine, pianist and composer, and for many years a member of the faculty of the Music Department of Harvard University, began in 1904 to compose a series of variations on the tune "Mary Had a Little Lamb" in the styles of famous composers through the ages. The first group of these variations was published in 1924 and the final group in 1943. The present disc contains all of them played by the composer. There are twenty variations in the styles of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Wagner, Debussy, Stravinsky, Gershwin, Sousa and others of equal prominence. Most of them are delightful, and all of them are interesting. For a pleasing few minutes or so, we suggest that you play a group of them at a time. The whole twenty at one sitting is entirely too much of a good thing. There are separating bands between each variation on this disc so that this may be easily accomplished.

Schubert: Moments Musicaux, Op. 94. Leonard Shure (piano). One side, and **Schumann: Andante and Variations in B-flat, Op. 46**. Vera Appleton and Michael Field (duo-pianists), Ralph Oxman and Bebe Sarser (violoncellos), and John Barrows (French horn). 1-12" disc (*VX-VLP-6050) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc, see under CHAMBER MUSIC.

Barber: Four Excursions, Op. 20. Rudolf Firkusny (piano). One side, and **Barber: Knoxville: "Summer of 1915," Op. 24**. Eleanor Steber (soprano) with the Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra conducted by William Strickland. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2174) \$4.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under VOCAL.

VIOLIN



Beethoven: Sonata No. 7 in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2. Jascha Heifetz (violin) accompanied by Emanuel Bay (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1499) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-60) \$4.67.

Jascha Heifetz has added his name to the growing list of violinists who have recorded Beethoven's *Sonata No. 7* since the advent of LP. It would be difficult to single out any performance as the best. It's really a matter of "who's your favorite violinist?" If you do not already own Stern's (*C-ML-54326), or Szigeti's (*C-ML-2097), or Rostal's (*L-LLP-162), we can assure you that Mr. Heifetz' first-rate rendition will fill out that blank space in your collection.



DICTION

General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Report to Congress, April 19, 1951. 1-12" disc (*C-PL-4410) \$3.

General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Report to Congress, April 19, 1951. 3-10" discs in album (V-P-317) \$3.72. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WP-317) \$3.04. 1-10" disc (*V-LPM-5) \$3.15.

General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Report to Congress, April 19, 1951. 3-7" discs in box (øCL-CCF-274) \$3.04. 1-10" disc (*CL-H-274) \$2.98.

General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Report to Congress, April 19, 1951. Highlights only. 1-12" disc (CL-DAS-274) \$1.31.

On 19 April 1951 General of the Army Douglas MacArthur addressed the Congress of the United States. His address, considered by many persons to be one of the greatest ever given by an American, was greeted with wild enthusiasm by millions of his countrymen. A great demand for a recording of it immediately sprang up all over the country. Several record manufacturers issued records of it. Three complete recordings, together with a shortened version, are listed above. We can see little choice between the complete recordings. Columbia pressed its version on a 12-inch disc but of course it does not contain anything that the other versions do not record. It would seem that on the Columbia disc there are less grooves per inch and thus its recording takes up more space.

Here is a recording of great historical value—one that through the ages will doubtless be referred to

again and again.

The Quick and the Dead (Vol. I: The Atom Bomb). Bob Hope, Helen Hayes, Paul Lukas and William L. Laurence with supporting cast. 5-12" discs in album (V-DM-1507) \$7.59. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1507) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1129) \$5.72.

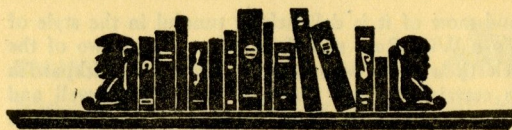
The Quick and the Dead (Vol. II: The Hydrogen Bomb). Bob Hope, Paul Lukas and William L. Laurence with supporting cast. 4-12" discs in album (V-DM-1508) \$6.29. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1508) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1130) \$5.72.

Last summer NBC broadcast a series of four weekly half-hour programs entitled "The Quick and the Dead." In these broadcasts the atom and hydrogen bombs were described in a dramatic manner that was easily understood by the average listener. They were so successful in accomplishing their purpose and caused so much interest that NBC re-broadcast them, and RCA Victor has recorded them so that they are now permanently available. At the conclusion of these broadcasts it is pointed out that atomic energy can be, and in fact is being, used for the benefit of mankind in the relief on many so-called "incurable" diseases. The moral of the story is that that which was originally designed to destroy men is now being successfully used to prolong their lives. We hope that the story these records contain will find listeners everywhere—we hope that our young people especially will have the opportunity of hearing it. It is certainly the sort of knowledge that can do no harm. In our opinion it may very likely direct our attention toward peace and a better life rather than war and the destruction of our fellow men.

Voices of Freedom (A half-century of American progress). Robert McCormick (narrator). 1-12" disc (*EDUCATIONAL SERVICES-ES-1) \$5.95.

The NBC news commentator, Robert McCormick, with the aid of The Chamber Chorus of Washington, introduces selections from recorded speeches by some of America's outstanding citizens. The theme of this whole recording is "Freedom" and Mr. McCormick weaves these various selected recorded excerpts together with an appropriate continuity. The first important voice to be heard is that of William Jennings Bryan in a short selection from a speech made in 1901, urging freedom for the Philippines; the final one is that of our present president in a speech made in 1950, re-affirming his faith in our continued freedom. Between these will be heard the voices of William Howard Taft, Edison, Peary, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Amelia Earhart, Will Rogers, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

This disc should be of interest to educators in our grade and high schools as well as those who are interested in collecting recordings of great personalities.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, AL—Allegro, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DG—Deutsche Grammophon, DI—Disc, GIOA—Griegorian Inst. of America, HS—Haydn Society, HW—Hargail, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, T—Telefunken, V—Victor, VX—Vox, WEST—Westminster, and W—Woodwind.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 ♣ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 4

JUNE, 1951

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

English HMV has recently issued its 1950-51 catalog. The publishers of this bulletin have secured limited quantities of the catalog which they will be glad to supply to readers requesting them as long as the supply lasts. The price is 50c each (postpaid in U.S.A.).

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.). Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Beethoven: *Fidelio* (highlights). (Sung in German). Bäumer, Sauerbaum, Hubner, Engert, Savelkoulis, Kuhnert with chorus and orchestra of Mittel-deutsche Rundfunk—Pflüger. 1-12" disc (*OCE-ANIC-OCS-21) \$5.95. (TNR Aug. '50).

Mozart: *Don Giovanni* (highlights). (Sung in Italian). Stabile, Konetzni, Grob-Prandl, Pernerstorfer, Handt, Heusser, Poell with Vienna Symphony Orchestra—Swarowsky. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-2031) \$5.95. (TNR May '51).

ORCHESTRA



Brahms: *Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98*. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Victor de Sabata. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9516) \$5.85.

Being familiar with Sabata's work and having seen him conduct a thrilling concert with the Philadelphia Orchestra, we were prepared for a real treat with this recording of the *Fourth* by Brahms. Possibly we anticipated too much, but when the performance was over we did not have the feeling that a truly great

reading had been heard. On replaying it, the idea struck us that Sabata may be trying too hard to seek new ideas or avenues of interpretation, to build up the dramatic side too much. Whatever it is, it did not ring true, we are sorry to say. For one who has some new ideas on this subject, we think Münch and the Boston Orchestra (*V-LM-1086) did a remarkable job. His reading we thought fascinating and very convincing. Krips and the London Symphony in their recent issue were rather lightweight for this symphony; Ormandy's recording of the work is not his best, nor Columbia's (this one should be remade). While our choice is therefore Münch, it is interesting to recall a previous Boston recording of the *Fourth* conducted by Koussevitzky, which everyone agreed was a beauty. It is doubtful whether Victor will reissue that one in their Treasury Series on LP. Koussevitzky met the challenge of the thirty variations in the last movement as can few conductors we have ever heard. This magnificent movement is one of the towering masterpieces of symphonic literature, and it takes a conductor of considerable accomplishments to do it justice. In the recording under discussion it is needless to say that the reliable Berlin Philharmonic plays well, but we felt at times that they played with not quite their usual conviction, as though doubtful of some of the conductor's ideas.

Decca's recent entry into the classical LP field has already resulted in some choice releases. Their access to the Deutsche Grammophon catalog promises more to come, as well as some fine domestic recordings. The present disc is a Deutsche Grammophon recording, with good, if not exceptional, reproduction. S.

Mozart: *Symphony No. 25 in G minor, K. 183*. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Kurt Eichhorn. One side, and Mozart: *Symphony No. 28 in C, K. 200*. Bavarian Radio Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Albert. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10032) \$4.85.

Mozart: *Symphony No. 29 in A, K. 201*. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Peter Maag. One side, and Mozart: *Symphony No. 36 in C, K. 425 ("Linz")*. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-286) \$5.95.

Because of their shorter length, Mozart symphonies are usually issued in pairs on LP discs. This business of pairing them makes decisions difficult when one

symphony may be done well while its companion work may not be so successful. Such is the case in the London disc above, where for the first time we think a Vienna Philharmonic recording is not very good. London's engineers were not up to par either. The *Linz*, No. 36, is poor reproduction by London's own standards, and conductor Böhm is coarse, stodgy, and heavy-handed. The reverse side of the disc finds a very good No. 29 played by the Suisse Romande Orchestra conducted by a newcomer to our list, Peter Maag. The orchestra plays nicely, and Maag has a good touch for Mozart, somewhat on the brisk side, but stylish and correct. The reproduction is good.

We thought the Mercury pair about the best Mozart they have issued. Both orchestras and both conductors are right on their toes, and the reproduction is faithful. No. 25, known as the "little" G minor, is an urgent and impassioned work, with a more personal message than usually found in his symphonies. No. 28 is a more lyric and graceful work, providing contrast to the G minor in this particular pairing, remarkable indeed for a seventeen year old lad. (No. 29 on the London disc above, together with the two on the Mercury disc, were written by Mozart during the latter part of 1773 and the early part of the following year.)

Competitive versions of these symphonies are as follows: No. 25 by Klemperer coupled with No. 36, *Linz*; No. 36, *Linz*, also by Heger coupled with No. 35. Nos. 28 and 29 appear here for the first time on LP. We suggest the present Mercury disc as a good buy, while waiting for something more distinguished in a *Linz*. S.

Schubert: Rosamunde, Op. 26—Incidental music.

One side, and **Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B Minor** ("Unfinished"). Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10034) \$4.85.

This disc has the distinction of offering two firsts: it is the first *Rosamunde* music on LP, and it has the first *Unfinished* on one LP side. Comparatively speaking, it also has a lot of music for your money on one disc. The *Rosamunde* music is long overdue and we are pleased that someone finally got around to it. Such exquisite melody, so typical of Schubert, deserves frequent playing. It would be interesting to have the complete score recorded, eleven numbers in all including the vocal excerpts (same idea as the *Midsummer Night's Dream Suite*). The sections here recorded are Introduction and Ballet No. 1; Entr'acte No. 1 in B minor; Entr'acte No. 3 in B flat; and Ballet No. 2 and Conclusion. The introduction is the original Overture in D minor to "Alfonso and Estrella." This curtain raiser for his opera of the same name is not our favorite *Rosamunde* overture, for the one commonly known is that originally written for a play titled "The Magic Harp." If this overture had been used, we would call the present suite a real blessing, but that "Alfonso" overture rather spoils things. Once it is out of the way, the succeeding

music is, of course, charming. It is played with a graceful feeling and comes off very well.

Heger's reading of the *Unfinished* must bear comparison to the renowned conductors who have also recorded it: Koussevitzky, Walter, Krips, and Toscanini. Heger is nearly in a class by himself, for with the exception of Walter he usually allows the music to speak for itself, which it can do most eloquently. This symphony can be pushed, blasted, and wrung hard, but it is at its best when someone with a rather Viennese approach is decent enough to treat it gently. Walter and Heger have the sympathetic approach which we prefer in this music. The symphony is so orchestrated that it can sound very loud and powerful, but that is not the object in this work.

The reproduction throughout this disc is quite good, the only reservation being a glassy string tone, which is not noticeable except on a high fidelity instrument. S.

Stokowski Conducts Bach (Volume I). Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 5-12" discs in album (V-DM-1512) \$7.59. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1512) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1133) \$5.72.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1497) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1125) \$5.72.

Evidently Stokowski is in the process of making new and modern recordings of his Bach transcriptions using his own orchestra. In the notes which he wrote he mentions the *Chaconne* as being a new orchestration. This is the *Chaconne in D minor* originally for solo violin. The album also contains a *Bourrée*, a *Siciliano* from the Sonata for clavier and violin in C minor, and a *Geistliches Lied Mein Jesu was fuer Seelenweh Befaellet Dich in Gethsemane*, which has probably never before been performed publicly. The program concludes with the great *Passacaglia in C minor*. The music is all played with exquisite finish and rich tonal beauty. We had the feeling that some of the intensity of inspiration of former Bach-Stokowski performances is a little lacking here; but there is also a serenity and nobility in this music that is becoming and welcome. There is much to admire in Stokowski's transcriptions of Bach, and this new set will be a pleasure to those who enjoy this music.

The Sibelius *First Symphony* has been treated in various ways as to interpretation. It can be played, generally speaking, slow and heroically, with long and lofty lines. It can also be played with a crispness and directness that lessen the romantic and intensify the dramatic aspects of the work. Stokowski is definitely in the latter bracket. His tempi at times are actually too fast, but whatever he does with this work, the symphony as a whole emerges as a compelling and convincing bit of interpretation on his part. Sibelius purists will gnash their teeth at some of the things that happen, but frankly, we loved every minute of it. It is done with superb skill; both Stokowski's conduct-

ing and the orchestra's playing are excellent. The reproduction of this symphony is as fine as you will hear, with the clarity and definition of the woodwinds incredibly good, and the general balance between choirs exceptional. The blending of the harp in tutti passages is the best we have ever heard. Surfaces are typical of late Victor LP—smooth as glass and noiseless. Our highest recommendation on this one. S.

Berlioz: *Symphonie Fantastique*, Op. 14. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 6-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-994) \$7.44. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1131) \$5.72.

Monteux is considered one of the greatest interpreters of the *Symphonie Fantastique* and it is fitting that Victor should have him re-record his version in their modernization program. This performance is similar to the previous one which appeared under the number DM-994, but although the 45 album number remains 994, this is actually a new recording. It is excellent in fidelity with a notably clearer quality than many San Francisco recordings, and it is also the finest orchestral playing we have heard from this orchestra. Generally speaking, we would say that Monteux has a way of making this music intensely interesting, a commendable trait which should help advance the popularity of this really fine score. The *Fantastique* is program music and Monteux is always good in such music. This disc is unquestionably the preferable version and is recommended highly. It is the only version at present on LP, except for a recent release just announced by Paul Paray and the Colonne Orchestra on Vox which we have not yet heard. There have been, of course, numerous recordings on 78 rpm.

The story of the symphony has been set out by Berlioz himself and forms a preface to the work. "A young musician of morbid sensibility and ardent imagination poisons himself with opium in an excess of amorous despair. The dose of narcotic, not strong enough to kill him, plunges him into a deep sleep, accompanied by strange visions, during which his sensations, sentiments and recollections take the form, in his sick brain, of musical thoughts and images. The beloved woman herself becomes for him a melody and like a fixed idea which he finds and hears everywhere." Anyone not yet familiar with this work should avail himself of the earliest opportunity to become acquainted with it, for it belongs on the shelf with the greatest of the standard repertoire works. S.

Stravinsky: *L'Oiseau de Feu*. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-300) \$4.95.

The *Firebird Suite* is now made in three versions on LP discs, one to suit every possible taste. Stravinsky has conducted a version which contains more of the music than either of the others. It is in his customary style, which is to say that it is accurate and authentic, exceedingly well played and in comparison

with the others, a little on the dry and uncompromising side. The present one by Ansermet is a suite including the Introduction and Dance of the Fire Bird, Dance of the Princesses, Dance of Kastchei, Lullaby, and Finale. Long known as a conductor *par excellence* of Stravinsky's music, Ansermet again offers a reading that is more plastic than the composer's own performance. The Suisse Romande Orchestra plays with surprising virtuosity, and the reproduction is strictly first rate. This disc we would call a middle-of-the-road job that should find wide appeal. Thirdly we have a new version, recently issued, by Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra, which is the last word in Stokowski's well-known version of *Firebird*. It is lush, dramatic, and exciting, and an extravagant display of orchestral coloring. For sheer sound it is tops and should appeal to most folks who are not too concerned with the letter of Stravinsky's score. As the reproduction of all three versions is excellent, the choice is entirely on interpretative matters—or in Stravinsky's own set, for the completeness of the music presented.

For those readers who are not fully acquainted with the more staple items in the symphonic repertoire, we would suggest acquiring *The Firebird Suite* soon after the more popular symphonies and concertos. It is a work that is colorful and melodious, easiest of all Stravinsky's music to comprehend, and but a short step beyond some of the obvious ballet suites by the romantic composers. The Dance of the Princesses, sweet and graceful music, is a good example; and Stokowski's serving of it will melt your heart for sure. S.

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 6 in B minor*, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). L'Orchestre de la Société du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Charles Münch. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-257) \$5.95.

In the August 1950 issue of THE NEW RECORDS, the above recording was reviewed as a two-record set. The Symphony occupied three sides, with the Overture-Fantasy *Romeo and Juliet* filling the fourth. Our reviewer stated at that time that he could not understand why London had presented the work in such extended form that the price was doubled (\$11.90), when other recording companies pressed the *Pathétique* on a single LP disc. The manufacturer has obviously taken such criticism seriously because we have here a re-issue on one 12-inch record. Insofar as we have been able to determine there is no diminution of quality or quantity in the transfer.

Spanish Music. Valencia Symphony Orchestra conducted by José Iturbi. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1503) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1128) \$5.72.

In 1943 Iturbi founded the Valencia Orchestra in his native city and since then has been its permanent conductor. Last year he took his orchestra on a tour of England and Scotland and at that time RCA Victor arranged with HMV to make these recordings.

All of the selections are by Spanish composers. The first is *Dances from The Three-Cornered Hat* by the late Manuel de Falla. The others are by living composers and include Manuel Palau's *March Burlesque* and *Hommage à Debussy*; Joaquín Rodrigo's *Homenaje a la Temperancia*; Eduardo Lopéz-Chavarri's *Interior from Valenciannos* and Mr. Iturbi's own *Seguidillas*.

The development of orchestral music suitable for the symphony orchestra has been a very slow process in Spain. In fact, not until the present century has much of consequence been produced. The present recordings show typical examples of what are presently available. None of it is great music by European standards, but it is interesting and those with a feeling for things Spanish will probably find it enjoyable.

Sousa Marches. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-10" discs in album (V-DM-1521) \$4.50. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1521) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-69) \$4.67.

Brahms: Hungarian Dances—Nos. 1 to 6. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-10" discs in album (V-DM-1518) \$4.50. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1518) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-67) \$4.67.

Rodríguez: La Cumparsita. One side, and **Albeniz: Triana** (From "Iberia," Book II). Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-3275) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3275) \$1.16.

Litolff: Robespierre—Overture. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-3267) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3267) \$1.16.

Reznicek: Donna Diana—Overture. One side, and **Weber: Abu Hassan—Overture.** Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-3266) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3266) \$1.16.

J. Strauss: Radetzky March. One side, and **Schramml: Wien Bleibt Wien** (Vienna Forever). Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-10" disc (V-10-3271) \$1.16. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3271) \$1.16.

Bosc: Rose Mousse—Entr'acte. One side, and **Gillet: Loin du Bal.** Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-10" disc (V-10-3270) \$1.16. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3270) \$1.16.

This month RCA Victor has released quite a sizable group of recordings by the ever-popular Boston Pops Orchestra under the brilliant direction of Arthur Fiedler. Lack of space does not permit our more than listing them, except to say that all of the selections have been splendidly recorded, and that they are the sort of pieces you would expect to hear if you attended a concert by this famous musical organization.

Music at Midnight. Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album (C-MM-992) \$5.35. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2171) \$4.

Morton Gould and his Orchestra have given us another collection of music suitable for dinner time or, as the title implies, "late suppers." Played and conducted in the inimitable Gould manner this disc will be a welcome addition to the lighter side of your record library. *Caravan*; *Moonglow*; *Song of the Bayou*; *Deserted Ballroom*; *Mood Indigo*; *Serenade in the Night*; *Deep Purple*; and *Swamp Fire* are the selections contained in *Music at Midnight*.

CONCERTO



Walton: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by William Walton. 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1511) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1511) \$3.99. Coupled with **Vieuxtemps: Concerto No. 5 in A minor, Op. 37** (TNR Sep. '48). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1121) \$5.72.

There are few modern violin concertos that have achieved anything like the success of the classic and romantic works in the same form. William Walton, Khachaturian, Prokofieff, and Berg, with their contributions, have convinced liberal-minded music lovers that they have something to say and that it can be said with color, excitement, and a fresh approach to the standard musical forms. It is true that the melodic line becomes obscure at times and, to be sure, one can rarely "hum" one's way through a passage as with the earlier works for violin.

All this is preamble to the fact that Jascha Heifetz has re-recorded one of his great successes, this time with the composer (who wrote it for, and dedicated it to, Heifetz in 1939). Now that it has become available on LP, we are more than ever impressed with the fact that many of the brilliantly executed passages and climaxes in this concerto were hamstrung by the interruptions necessary on 78 rpm discs.

The *Vieuxtemps Concerto*, released over two years ago on 78 rpm's, gains considerably on LP in that it is in one movement and as such is played without pause.

H.

Brahms: Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 77. Ossy Renardy (violin) with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-1) \$5.95.

One of the most beloved concertos in all literature is the *Brahms Violin Concerto*—like many other composers, Brahms wrote only one. It is a work of beauty and also of beautiful construction. It has received numerous recordings, but this one is only the second to appear on LP; the other version is by Szigeti with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. The present set has an accompaniment which many will feel is a better adjusted affair; Ormandy's was considered rather weighty, a characteristic of his

Brahms conducting. Münch's accompaniment is not only excellent in itself, but very well adjusted to his soloist's performance. As for Renardy, he's no Szigeti or Heifetz, but he plays with uncommon feeling and warmth and a great sympathy for the music. His playing at times seemed labored nearly to point of being clumsy in the tricky portions. In the slower passages, his tone is rich, rather dark, and steady. His overall interpretation, as we have suggested, is entirely admirable, being straightforward yet seasoned with emotion. The reproduction is good London, which is mighty good. We think it's a toss-up between Renardy and Szigeti, but would prefer Szigeti for the fiddling superiority.

The concerto comes from the same period as Brahms's *Second Symphony*, with which, in spirit, it has much in common. A similar serenity and a similar insistence on a carefully balanced form pervade both works. Brahms had taken a vacation in Italy, and shafts of warm Italian sunshine seem to have penetrated both this work and its companion—the equally serene *Second Piano Concerto*. In a work of this character, it must be approached with feeling and emphasis on the music, rather than a display of technical prowess. Both recordings are certainly sincere in that respect. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Schubert: Quartet No. 14 in D minor ("Death and the Maiden"). Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5052) \$5.95.

Schubert: Quintet in C, Op. 163. Hollywood String Quartet with Kurt Reher (violin). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8133) \$4.98.

The trade papers are presently full of letters from record dealers complaining about the vast number of new record releases. The dealers, especially in the smaller towns, state that the volume of their business does not warrant their stocking all of the new recordings that are released. They particularly point out there is no reason for additional recordings of a composition that is already represented in the catalogs with an adequate recorded version.

The two LP discs listed above are prime examples of this condition. There is already a fine LP recording of the *Quartet No. 14 in D minor* by the Fine Arts Quartet (ME-MG-10008) and a thoroughly adequate one of the *Quintet in C* by the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet (WEST-WL-5033). We quite agree that the dealers have a strong point here because we can see little choice between the two versions of each of these works now available. However, they are available and music lovers may make their choice.

Schönberg: Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4 (Transfigured night). (Original version). Hollywood String Quartet with Alvin Dinkin (viola) and Kurt Reher (violin). 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8118) \$3.98.

As far as our records show, this recording, made

under the supervision of the composer, is the first electrical one of this work in its original form for string sextet. We seem to remember an acoustical recording of this version which was made in England by N.G.S. about a quarter of a century ago.

We have nothing but praise for the present recording. The players are surely in full sympathy with the composer's score, and Capitol has supplied the best of reproduction. Schönberg's best-known work should gain even wider popularity through this superb recording.

OPERA



Bizet: Carmen (complete). (Sung in French). Marthe Angelici (soprano); Solange Michel (mezzo-soprano); Raoul Jobin (tenor); Michel Dens (baritone); and supporting soloists with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Théâtre National de l'Opéra Comique de Paris conducted by André Cluytens. 15-12" discs in album (C-MOP-33) \$20.60. 15-17" discs in box (øC-MOP-4-33) \$17.75. 3-12" discs (*C-SL-109) \$16.35.

Carmen ranks, with *Faust* and *Aida*, as one of the three most popular operas in the world. To call the roll of famous *Carmens* would be to list all the great singing actresses of the past seventy-five years. The creator of the role (and, in the minds of many, one of its greatest interpreters) was Mme. Galli-Marié. Zélie de Lussan (who made the very first Red Seal Records for Victor back in 1905) was a much admired *Carmen* as was the American Minnie Hauck, but the greatest, by general opinion, was Emma Calvé. In present times there have been no great *Carmens*, Maria Jeritza and Jennie Tourel being the best of what must be described as an ordinary group.

The present recording gives us a vocally competent but histrionically over-refined *Carmen* in the person of Solange Michel. Hers is a well placed mezzo, ideal for the role, clear and vibrant throughout its range. This, coupled with her excellent diction, makes her performance a delight to the ear and, had she been able to infuse a little fire into her characterization, the results would have been far more convincing. The Don José of Raoul Jobin is a disappointment. His voice is unmusical; he shouts rather than sings, sounding at times as if he were trying to crack walnuts with his vocal cords. In addition he is unconvincing dramatically. Marthe Angelici is a better than average Micaëla. She is well cast, is in excellent voice and makes the most of what is a thankless role. Michel Dens, the Escamillo, does remarkably well. To him falls the dreadful task of singing the *Toreador's Song*—dreadful not because of its popularity but because it is so tremendously difficult. A baritone with the range of a tenor is required; M. Dens is a tenor with a baritone's range and, with the exception of a few poor low notes, gives a fine performance. The others in the long cast are competent, if at times uninspired.

Taken by and large, this *Carmen* is good, routine stuff, but when will producers and record companies learn that a note-perfect performance is only the raw material of an artistic performance. Nowadays note-perfect performances are the rule but the artistic performance is becoming phoenix-like in its rarity.

Columbia's recording is fine, being one of the best accorded a complete opera on LP. Good, well-balanced sound, replete with sound effects (almost too much in the *Chanson Bohème*) is the order of the day. The opera is presented in its original form—that is, with spoken dialog. In view of this it is astonishing that Columbia should not have supplied a French-English libretto. They do furnish a set of English words that are virtually useless for following the plot. Thus, the purchaser of *Carmen* must buy his own libretto to follow properly the performance. W.

R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier (complete). (Sung in German). Margarete Bäumer, Tiana Lemnitz, Ursula Richter (sopranos); Hans Löbel (basso); and supporting soloists with the Chorus of the Dresden State Opera and the Saxonian State Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. 4-12" discs in album (*URANIA-URLP-201) \$25.25.

"A comedy for music by H. von Hofmannsthal . . . music by Richard Strauss," thus reads the title page of the score of *Der Rosenkavalier*, an indication of the poet's importance. Hofmannsthal was the most prominent of contemporary Continental authors and he put together an almost model libretto, combining elements of the comedy of intrigue, the comedy of manners, a bit of farce and satire. These parts are then welded into an harmonious whole by humor and pathos. Strauss supplied, for the most part, captivating music. The work was first produced in Dresden on 26 January 1911. Approximately two years later, on 9 December 1913 it appeared at New York's Metropolitan Opera House.

This issue, by Urania Records, will be welcomed by the many lovers of the opera. It is a fine, authentic performance, well sung, directed with feeling and the over-all effect is one of sprightliness and affection. Margarete Bäumer, the Princess von Werdenberg, is known to collectors as the Leonore in the complete *Fidelio*. The music here suits her voice better and her portrayal of the aging Marschallin is a fine one. There is more than a trace of vibrato in her voice, especially when pushed, but there is still a goodly share of the voice that, at one time, made her one of the most sought-after dramatic sopranos on the Continent. Tiana Lemnitz's voice also shows signs of wear, but such is her artistry that she not only makes Octavian convincing—she nearly steals the show! Ursula Richter, as Sophie, has a fine time, singing in a high, clear, lyric soprano eminently suited to the role. The Baron Ochs of Kurt Böhm comes highly praised, and it is a real pleasure to report that he lives up, or rather sings up, to his advance notices. His rich, sonorous bass, musical withal, is well-nigh

perfect for the part and there is no evidence of "over-bidding" on the farcical aspects of the character. His voice is even in register and capable of a wide range of expression. The host of minor characters are well cast, and all are capable. Special praise must be given Hans Löbel for his excellent Herr von Faninal.

The direction of Rudolf Kempe is authoritative and to the point. He knows his score and the Saxonian State Orchestra plays in a manner that justifies its inclusion among the five greatest orchestras in the world.

The recording, made at Dresden in December 1950 is excellently accomplished, a complete German-English libretto and additional notes are supplied—the rest is up to the listener; Urania Records have done a superb job! W.

Verdi: Highlights from "Aida." (Sung in Italian). Camilla Williams (soprano); Lydia Ibarrondo (mezzo-soprano); Giulio Gari (tenor); Lawrence Winters (baritone); with the Orchestra of the New York City Opera. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-554) \$3.

Gounod: Highlights from "Faust." (Sung in French). Frances Yeend, Frances Bible (sopranos); Rudolph Petrak (tenor); Walter Cassel (baritone); Norman Scott (basso); with the Orchestra of the New York City Opera. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-553) \$3.

M-G-M inaugurates a new series of "highlights" from popular operas, performed by soloists and the orchestra of the New York City Opera Company, with these two releases.

From "Faust" we have *Avant de quitter ces lieux; Le Veau d'Or; Faites-lui mes aveux; Salut demeure; O Nuit d'amour; Vous qui faites de l'endormie*; and the finale *Alerte Alerte!* Miss Yeend is a fine Marguerite, exhibiting her soaring high tones to great advantage. Frances Bible, Walter Cassel and Norman Scott (Siebel, Valentine and Mephisto) sing with expression and create a convincing atmosphere. Rudolph Petrak is a somewhat lachrymose Faust. Laszlo Halasz, the conductor and music director of the NYC Opera Company, has elected to use tempi that are much too fast; causing some of the music to sound trite and trivial, which is all right so long as the listener realizes that it is Mr. Halasz' idea and not Gounod's.

On the other hand, *Aida* is an unalloyed delight. Camilla Williams is a superb Aida, Lydia Ibarrondo a sumptuous-voiced Amneris, and the Amonasro of Lawrence Winters, while dramatically sung, is notable for its restraint and good taste. Giulio Gari must be singled out for special praise for his Rhadames. He sings the difficult *Celeste Aida* with fervor and intelligence, closing with a ringing high B. Included on this exceptional disc are *O patria mia; Celeste Aida*; a portion of the *Aida-Amneris* duet beginning with the words *Fu la sorte dell'armi*; the *Grand March*, the duet *Rivedrai le foreste inbalsamente*; the scene *Già*

i sacerdoti adunonsi; and a portion of the finale *O terra addio*.

The enterprise is starting in a noteworthy manner, and it is fervently hoped it will continue, for such records will serve the excellent purpose of introducing opera in its original language to many who might be frightened off by the cost and length of a complete opera. It is difficult to imagine anyone with a taste for music remaining indifferent to these sets, especially *Aida*.

Recording is good, surfaces not quite as smooth as those on the more expensive records but not objectionable. Above average notes are supplied for both sets by Edward Cole. W.

Italian Operatic Arias. Eugene Conley (tenor) with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-280) \$4.95.

London releases in this country this month a little LP disc containing a number of operatic selections that the brilliant young American tenor, Eugene Conley, recorded during his stay in England. Mr. Conley made his debut with the Metropolitan Opera during the 1949-50 season after having appeared with lesser opera companies in this country and with outstanding success abroad with La Scala (Milan), Covent Garden (London) and L'Opera-Comique (Paris). As we listen to his fine recordings, it is easy to realize the rapid advancement this young artist has made in his chosen field. It is interesting to note that Mr. Conley was trained entirely in the United States. Another example of a home town boy who has made good both amongst his neighbors and in the musical capitals abroad.

The selections on this LP disc are: *A te o cara* and *Vieni, vieni fra queste braccia* from "I Puritani;" *O paradiso* from "L'Africaine;" *Tombe degl'avi miei, Fra poco me ricovero, and Tu che a dio spiegasti l'ali* from "Lucia;" and *Cielo e mar* from "La Gioconda."

Operatic Recital. Suzanne Danco (soprano) with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-224) \$5.95.

Suzanne Danco, the Belgian lyric soprano, offers a recital of operatic airs astounding in its virtuosity and accomplished, for the most part, with ease and good sense of style.

The disc opens with a well nigh perfect performance of *Depuis le jour* from "Louise." All the ecstasy and vitality of the music are realized and projected with Gallic spirit and clarity. From "La Traviata" Mlle. Danco sings the inimitable *Ah fors è lui* and *Sempre libre*. These are well sung albeit with a certain detachment not in keeping with the spirit of the music. *Adieu notre petit table* from "Manon" is next and is the least successful of all because of the coolness with which it is sung. Miss Danco does not seem able to convey the pathos and heartbreak implicit in the music. For a comparison hear Victoria de los Angeles (øV-49-3227). From here on everything improves. A magnificent *Divinités du Styx* from "Al-

ceste" is followed by a tremendously moving performance of Micaëla's Aria *Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante*. The record ends with the famous lament of Dido *When I am laid in Earth*, sung in impeccable English.

Suzanne Danco sings with perfect method and possesses, to an extraordinary degree, the ability to spin out a phrase, ending with an exquisite *pianissimo*. That she is a thoroughly trained musician and linguist in addition, is obvious from this recording.

The orchestral accompaniments have been entrusted to the very capable Alberto Erede, who directs the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande with authority and good taste. The recording is silky and realistic, being a fine example of the current London *frr* technique. W.

Cimarosa: Il Matrimonio Segreto (The Secret Marriage) (complete). (Sung in Italian). Alda Noni (soprano); Ornella Rovero, Giulietta Simionato (mezzo-sopranos); Cesare Valletti (tenor); Sesto Bruscantini, Antonio Cassinelli (bassos); with the Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino conducted by Manno Wolf-Ferrari. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1214) \$17.85.

The memory of *Il Matrimonio Segreto*, one of Domenico Cimarosa's sixty-odd works in this form, remains green in this country virtually only because of its sparkling overture. It was first produced in Vienna on 7 February 1792 while Cimarosa was in the musical service of Leopold II. It had an enviable reception and was soon heard throughout the continent. It did not appear in a Metropolitan season until 1937 when it was given, in English, by one of the weakest casts ever assembled by that august institution. As might be expected, the work was found dull and pedestrian. Cimarosa is no more proof against treatment of this sort than Puccini or Gounod.

As is their habit, Cetra has gathered together a formidable array of singers for this amiable *opera buffa*. The cast is headed by the tireless Sesto Bruscantini in the role of Geronimo. Vocally and artistically his performance is excellent, and he demonstrates again that he belongs in the front rank of the rare category of singing actors. Alda Noni, a vivacious coloratura, and Ornella Rovero, a light-voiced mezzo-soprano, sing the two sisters, Carolina and Elisetta, with spirit and conviction. Giulietta Simionato (who will be remembered favorably for her performances in *Cenerentola* and *Il Barbiere*) sings superbly as their aunt Fidalma. Cesare Valletti, sounding a little thin-voiced at times, is Paolini, while Antonio Cassinelli, another fine Italian baritone, makes the most of the role with the curiously English title of Count Robinson. The orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino under Manno Wolf-Ferrari play with spirit and they are able to convey much of the sparkle and humor with which the score is invested.

Cetra's recording is a bit uneven, as has been the case with some of their previous releases. The recording is, however, a welcome one—both for its historic as well as for its entertainment value. W.

Puccini: La Fanciulla del West (The Girl of the Golden West) (complete). (Sung in Italian). Carla Gavassi (soprano); Vasco Campagnano (tenor); Ugo Savarese (baritone); and supporting soloists with the EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Arturo Basile. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1215) \$17.85.

One of the most gala *premières* of modern times was that of Puccini's *Fanciulla del West* on 10 December 1910. On hand for the occasion were Puccini himself ("The performance has been perfect") and David Belasco on whose play the opera was based ("I am divinely happy"). In the cast were Emmy Destinn, Enrico Caruso and Pasquale Amato while the conductor's desk was occupied by Arturo Toscanini. The work was well received and remained in the repertory for four years, obtaining twenty-two performances. It was revived after fifteen years, in 1929, with Jeritz, Martinelli and Tibbett. This restoration lasted three years and ran to a total of twelve performances. It has not been heard there since.

The score is an anomalous one, full of incongruities for American ears (Italian cowboys and such expressions as "Hello Minnie!", "E whiskey!" and "Hello ragazzi") and it is doubly difficult on records because there is no stage action to hold the thing together. Then too, there are no big moments in the score—no *Un bel di's* or *Vissi d'arte's* or *O soave fanciulla's*—the closest approach being the short tenor aria *Ch'ella me credo libero* in the last act.

The Minnie of Carla Gavazzi is, for the most part, a finely conceived characterization and vocally above reproach. Sheriff Rance, as sung by Ugo Savarese, is not convincing but through no fault of his. (Italian sheriffs in the wide open spaces are hard to imagine.) The same criticism and more applies to Vasco Campagnano who undertakes the role of Dick Johnson. He sings with many gulps and sobs, such sounds apparently passing for emotion among certain types of tenors. All this, you may be sure, adds nothing to his characterization of a Western "bad man." The other roles in the long cast are all minor ones, some of which are handled competently, others somewhat less than average.

Arturo Basile conducts in what is, one fears, routine fashion. The score is far from inspired and his direction does nothing to alleviate the situation. Routine is also the word for the recording. All in all the set is a disappointment—better hear it first if, on the basis of the other Puccini operas, you feel it would be nice to own it. W.

Puccini: Madama Butterfly—*Un bel di, vedremo* (Act II). One side, and **Puccini: Madama Butterfly**—*Con onor muore* (Act II). Maria Cebotari (soprano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6940) \$1.84.

The untimely death of Maria Cebotari in the early summer of 1949 took from the European operatic stage a great and dependable artist who had graced

its boards in leading roles for over twenty years. Miss Cebotari was born in Bessarabia and as a very young girl joined the Moscow Art Theatre. She came to the attention of noted conductor, Issay Dobrowen, and he arranged for her to study singing with Daniel in Berlin. In less than a year she joined the Dresden Opera Company and from then on her rise in the operatic field was rapid and secure. Butterfly was one of her first roles and continued to be one of her favorites. American music lovers may gain some idea of her in this part through the splendid record listed above. Cebotari has passed on, but at least some of her art remains for us on the little black discs she left behind her.

Great Operatic Arias. Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1429) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1429) \$3.99.

Bizet: *The Pearl Fishers*—*Mi par d'udir ancora*.

Giordano: *Andrea Chenier*—*Come un bel di di Maggio*.

Verdi: *Luisa Miller*—*Quando le sere al placido*.

Donizetti: *Don Pasquale*—*Sogno soave e casto*.

Massenet: *Manon*—*Le Rêve*.

Massenet: *Werther*—*Pourquoi me réveiller?*

The first four selections listed above were recorded by Cetra in Europe and are being issued in this country by RCA Victor by special permission. The two Massenet arias are domestic recordings.

There is a substantial demand for operatic recordings by Tagliavini and thus these releases should have a wide appeal. All of the arias are ones that suit this lyric tenor's voice and style, and we are sure that his many fans will find them highly pleasing.

CHORAL *X a "must" ✓*

Haydn: Missa Sanctae Caeciliae (St. Cecilia Mass). (Sung in Latin). Rosl Schwaiger (soprano); Sieglinde Wagner (alto); Herbert Handt (tenor); Walter Berry (basso); with the Akademie Chorus of Vienna and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dr. Hans Gillesberger. 2-12" discs in album (*HS-HSLP-2028) \$11.90.

Haydn wrote fourteen masses for the Roman Catholic Church Service according to most recent musicological research. Two of these are lost; the remaining dozen constitute what many musicians now regard as a side of Haydn only equalled in importance and intrinsic beauty by the string quartets and symphonies. Until the advent of LP records and the concurrent Haydn "renaissance," the Masses in particular suffered almost complete neglect. Five of the twelve extant Masses have now been recorded in their entirety.

As pointed out above, these Masses were written for the Church Service, but an exception must be made in the case of the *Missa Sanctae Caeciliae* which is a huge festival mass, a sort of Cantata-Mass, much

on the same general lines as the great *Mass in B Minor* of Bach and, incidentally, nearly as long! The music harks back to the baroque era (not so long past in 1768-73) in the magnificent splendor of the choruses and in the method of composition of the arias, with their austere unison passages and florid vocal parts. The orchestration, particularly in the use of trumpets instead of horns, is also of the pre-classic era.

The richness of the score precludes specific mention of its many glories. The *Benedictus* is outstanding and unique in that no soloists are employed. Of course, the enormous seven-part *Gloria* (comprising a little over one and a half sides!) is one of the really tremendous things in all music; no one can truthfully say "Papa" Haydn after hearing it.

The soloists are all of high calibre, Rosl Schwaiger and Sieglinde Wagner being exceptionally fine. Dr. Gillesberger and the chorus and orchestra give a performance that would be difficult to improve on. The recording and general musicianship of the entire enterprise place the set in the "must" category for all music lovers. Without a knowledge of his *Masses* one just does not know Haydn; and that, in this day and age, is not only inexcusable, it is downright foolish.

W.

Haydn: Missa Solemnis in B-flat ("Theresienmesse"). (Sung in Latin). Anny Felbermayer (soprano); Dagmar Herrmann (contralto); Julius Patzak (tenor); Alfred Poell (bass-baritone); and Josef Mertin (organ) with the Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6740) \$5.95.

Vox Records, stealing some of the Haydn Society's thunder, presents the first recorded version of Haydn's *Mass in B Flat* also known as the *Theresienmesse*. This is a magnificent work, dating from 1799. The form is the usual one of the Missal; and Haydn, at the top of his powers, wrote glorious music—music that defies description. There are virile tunes, wonderful polyphony and, for the period, daring harmonies. The treatment of the orchestra is Beethovenian in character.

The soloists for this recording include some of the finest singers on the Continent today. Alfred Poell's sonorous and musical baritone is a decided asset, as is the excellent tenor of Julius Patzak. Anny Felbermayer and Dagmar Herrmann are also top-flight artists and complete as fine a quartet of voices as could be found. The Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Symphony are also more than equal to the task and cover themselves and the music with glory.

One of the high spots of the work is to be found in the opening *Kyrie* which, though fugal in nature, is also march-like and moves with an inexorableness that can only be described as magnificent in the fullest meaning of that somewhat overworked adjective. The same applies to the *Gloria* that follows. Another

great moment occurs in the *Sanctus* sung by Alfred Poell in a thrilling and dramatic manner.

Through the mass, however, majestic and towering though it is, runs a thread of real humanity. It is personal music, obviously deeply felt and, since Haydn was a good man, full of reverence and love for both God and man, this *Mass in B Flat* becomes a personal testament. Only a man like Haydn could have written the *Gratias agimus* section of the *Gloria*.

The disc is highly recommended, for in addition to the wonderful music there is recording and performance to match.

W.

Beethoven: Cantata on the Death of the Emperor Joseph II, Op. 196a. (Sung in German). Ilona Steingruber (mezzo-soprano) and Alfred Poell (bass-baritone) with the Akademie Kammerchor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6820) \$5.95.

Josef II, Emperor of Germany, died on 2 February 1790 and Beethoven was commissioned to write a cantata for the memorial celebration. The work was not performed for reasons not made clear, and it has remained in relative obscurity. Vox has revived the work from its undeserved neglect and presents it this month in a rousing recording.

The *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Josef II*, to give the piece its full title, is an amazing composition. Beethoven was not quite twenty years old when he wrote it, and there was nothing like it in his previous work to prepare one for it—in fact, it was not until much later in his career that Beethoven again achieved the intense, brooding, personal quality that makes its first appearance here. The work must be considered a "freak" then, for it is so completely apart, in mood and treatment from anything he had been experimenting with; and there is little in the sonatas and chamber music of the Bonn period to hint at the power and intensity of this *Cantata*.

The soloists, Ilona Steingruber and Alfred Poell, are magnificent! Herr Poell has, perhaps, the most dramatic moment of the *Cantata* in the recitative *Ein Ungeheurer sein Name Fanatismus* and the ensuing aria *Da komm Josef mit Gottes Stärke* and he sings in heroic fashion. Mme. Steingruber has a sympathetic voice, with excellent range, and her performance of the aria *Da stiegen die Menschen* is extremely effective. This aria, incidentally, is of particular interest, for Beethoven thought well enough of it to use it in *Fidelio*—in the second finale where Leonora sets her husband free (*O welch' ein Augenblick*).

To the Akademie Kammerchor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra under the sure hand of Clemens Krauss, goes much of the credit for this stirring performance. The fine high excitement, the grandiose portions of the score are all fully realized and projected with the utmost clarity.

The recording is technically above reproach and,

all in all, the record is a most welcome addition to the recorded repertory. W.

Kodály: Missa Brevis in Tempore Belli. (Sung in Latin). One and one-half sides, and **Britten: Rejoice in the Lamb** (A Festival Cantata). (Sung in English). Soloists with the Chancel Choir of the National Presbyterian Church (Washington, D. C.) and Theodore Schaefer (organ). 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-4) \$5.95.

The *Missa Brevis in Tempore Belli* was written in 1945 while the Russians were "freeing" Budapest from German occupation troops. Its first American performance, with Zoltán Kodály conducting, was on January 26, 1947, by the same group making this record. The present recording was made exactly four years after the American premiere.

The work is written for mixed chorus and organ with soloists (contralto, tenor and bass) only in the *Gloria* (the portion beginning "qui tollis peccata mundi miserere nobis"). The music is a happy compromise between melody and present day dissonance and sophistication. It is somewhat sombre in character as befits a *Mass in Time of War*, dark in color and remarkably free from the hectic, almost frenetic quality that infests so much of our modern music.

The *Missa Brevis* consumes one side and a small portion of the other. The balance of the disc is taken up with Benjamin Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*, a Festival Cantata set to a text collated from a lengthy poem *Jubilate Agno* by Christopher Smart. This is the sort of musical project that makes one stop and wonder. Why set to music a poem (save the mark!) by a man who "suffered periodic confinement for religious mania and chronic alcoholism" as the notes so politely put it? The music, as supplied for the incoherent text by Mr. Britten, is the sort of stuff a second rate composer could turn out by the yard. It is dull and monotonous, meandering along for about fifteen minutes and then, with no ado whatsoever, stopping.

The Chancel Choir of the National Presbyterian Church does a fine job in both selections and Theodore Schaefer, who conducts from the organ, deserves high praise for a difficult task well done. The record is well worth owning for the Kodály *Mass*; the Britten opus may intrigue those interested in English music. The disc is magnificently recorded, and intelligent notes are supplied by Dr. William Ober. W.

Laudate Dominum (Gregorian Chant). Trappist Monks of the Abbey of Gethsemani (Kentucky). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-54394) \$5.45.

Two groups of Gregorian Chant are presented on this LP disc, as sung by the Trappist Monks of the Abbey of Gethsemani, Kentucky. They are of the Cistercian Order, so the selections are also called Cistercian Chant. This Order in 1098 reformed itself and returned to the original Rule of St. Benedict thus conforming with the monastic simplicity of the sixth century—a life of solitude and silence.

The chants recorded here are of two types and the first side is devoted to the ancient and contemplative works. The other side contains music having more popular appeal. These chants are of more recent composition, dating from the middle ages.

Musically the record has very little value because of a serious artistic blunder—that of having Thomas Merton (Father Lewis) give a speaking translation of the chants while they are being sung. Even for educational purposes (the obvious reason for this type of presentation) the idea is not a good one for the spoken word does not mix with singing.

As well as can be gathered, the Trappist Monks are a well-trained organization and they sing surpassing well, but with someone talking all the time (which is what the "commentary" amounts to) the musical value that the undertaking originally had is ruined.

This is a record for students, for those studying the Catholic ritual. It will not interest the average music lover or students of Gregorian Chant. This is a pity, for they seem to be exceptionally well-selected and sung. The recording is uniformly good. W.

Sacred Music Around the Church Year. Trapp Family Singers directed by Father Frank Wasner. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1100) \$5.95.

The Trapp Family Singers have certainly found a place in the hearts of American music lovers since they left their native Austria shortly after the Nazis invaded that country. Their numerous concerts have been well attended, and the recordings they have made have enjoyed steady sales. This new LP disc contains a group of religious selections that are appropriate for various church celebrations from Advent to Pentecost. There are sixteen selections, some sung in Latin, some in German and one in English. The text of each is supplied and short informative notes describe each piece. Each is delightful to listen to, and for a quiet hour of great charm with the Trapp Family the present disc is indicated. The best of reproduction prevails.

VOCAL



Dowland: (15) Elizabethan Songs. Du Bose Robertson (tenor) accompanied by Suzanne Bloch (lute). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-96) \$5.45.

Lute Songs and Dances. Suzanne Bloch (lute). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-93) \$5.45.

Italian Songs of the 16th and 17th Century. One side, and **Spanish Songs of the 16th Century.** Hugues Cuenod (tenor) accompanied by Hermann Leeb (lute). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5059) \$5.95.

A veritable plethora of Renaissance and Baroque music is with us in these days of tape recording and LP records. Music that has lain quietly on dusty museum shelves is now sounding again for modern ears—sounding in a variety of ways from the extremely fascinating to plain dull.

DuBose Robertson and Suzanne Bloch collaborate on the first of the above three discs to present 15 *Elizabethan Songs* by John Dowland (1653-1626). They range in expression from passionate love lyrics to equally passionate thoughts of death. There is a peculiar fire to all the Elizabethan poetry that Dowland captures in these songs. Faulty microphone placement makes it difficult to appraise Mr. Robertson's voice. It seems a bit colorless and somewhat limited in range. Miss Bloch's lute accompaniments add the necessary touch of verisimilitude to the enterprise.

In *Lute Songs and Dances*, Miss Bloch plays and sings a variety of Renaissance Music from Italy, France, Germany and England. Included are a few well known items such as *Amarilli* (Caccini) and *Greensleeves*, but the remainder is all new to records. There is more variety here than on either of the other two discs but without trying to be intentionally unkind, one wonders why Miss Bloch attempts to sing? She can summon up no more than a hoarse whisper that does not remotely do justice to the music.

The Westminster disc is the most musical, and by the same token the most interesting. A fine array of 16th and 17th Century Italian songs are presented including compositions by Marco da Gagliano (1575-1642); Frescobaldi's *Se l'aura spira* and A. Scarlatti's *Cara e dolce*. The 16th Century Spanish songs and dances are by two composers, Luis Milan (1500-1561) and Alonzo de Mudarra (no dates, but of the same period). These are somewhat less interesting to modern ears, but form an effective overside for the Italian music. In all these songs Hugues Cuenod sings with his accustomed sense of style and finesse. His is not a great voice, but it is pleasant and the qualities of musicianship and scholarship he exhibits are of a high order.

The lute, by the way, is heard on two of these three records (Bloch and Cuenod) as a solo instrument. Mr. Leeb, accompanist for M. Cuenod, seems to have the better of it, but make no mistake—the lute is a tricky instrument, given to emitting sundry whistles and rattles even in the hands of experts.

The recording ranges from fair on the Allegro discs to magnificent for Westminster; all, however, are worthy of investigation. W.

Loewe: Ballads. (Sung in German). Wilhelm Strienz (basso) accompanied by Hans Willi Häusslein (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-310) \$5.95.

Karl Loewe (1796-1869) is recognized as the true founder of the song form known as the *ballad*. One should not confuse the term *ballad* as applied to the art form of Loewe and Brahms, for example, with the modern ballad or salon song. It takes its name from the narrative nature of the poem or text and has little or no connection with the dance.

All these ballads have been recorded many times by such artists as Schlusnus, Hüsck and Erb in the palmy days of 78 rpm recording, but this is their first appearance on LP discs. Included are such favorites

as *Edward*; *Tom der Reimer*; *Prinz Eugen der edle Ritter*; *Der sel't'ne Beter*; *Die Uhr Odins Meeresritt*; and *Der Nock*.

The general tenor of the music is narrative and, of course, highly romantic and supernatural. In *Der Nock* we have the story of a water sprite. *Tom der Reimer* is a tale of fairies and magic. All are set to bold melodic phrases with varied and ingenious accompaniments.

The soloist, Wilhelm Strienz, is a disappointment vocally. Those who remember his Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* will be, as this reviewer was, sadly disillusioned by this recording. Herr Strienz has virtually no voice left; it is a shadow of the magnificent organ of ten or twelve years ago. Occasionally a phrase or a few notes burst forth with the old power and resonance, but for the most part it is a worn nasal voice, uncertain in pitch and with a general feeling of strain that communicates itself to the listener and makes him almost as uncomfortable as the soloist. In all fairness it must be said, however, that Strienz' artistry never fails him and all the ballads (notably *Der Nock* and *Edward*) are thrillingly realized.

London's *frr* recording is good as usual, but the decline of Wilhelm Strienz' vocal ability is saddening and puts the record in the dubious class. Better hear this one first. W.

Pepusch: The Beggar's Opera. (Complete). Philip Bourneuf, Betty Garde, Alan Hewitt with supporting cast and orchestra directed by Max Goberman. 3-12" discs in album (*DESTO-301/3) \$17.85.

About ten years ago RCA Victor released an album containing some excerpts from John Gay's masterpiece. These excerpts were from a new version by Frederick Austin which had a very successful run in England during the early 1920's. The present recording is complete and is based on the original text with its score by Dr. Pepusch, a German musician, who at the time (1728) was living in England. The 69 songs for the most part are English, Scotch and French folk songs to which Gay fitted his inimitable words. Pepusch composed the overture and occasional musical interludes. He also supplied the basses and harmonies for the songs.

John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* was produced in London on 29 January 1728 by John Rich. It had an unprecedented run of sixty-two performances and "made Gay rich and Rich gay." Gay conceived the work as a political and musical satire with the particular aim of poking fun at the current Italian opera with its absurd plots and mannered nonsense. He was so successful in his aim that the thirty year reign of Italian opera in England came to an abrupt end. It consists mainly of a series of episodes in songs connected by short spoken sections. It is a forerunner to that popular operetta style peculiar to the English which eventually came into full bloom in the works of Gilbert and Sullivan. Although it is of course dated, it is even today amusingly entertaining.

The present recorded performance makes use of

two casts—an acting and a singing cast. Thus the problem of securing actors who can sing and singers who can act is very happily eliminated. An attempt was made to secure actors and singers whose voices would blend for each important character and we are happy to say that this difficult task has been reasonably well accomplished. However, one must not be too critical and must summon his imagination to help him feel that the person who speaks the lines is also the one who sings the same character's songs. The text of each of the sixty-nine songs is supplied in a nicely printed leaflet with this recording, and as the spoken lines are so crystal clear, it is very easy to follow the amusing plot.

If one would like to know and appreciate what amused our English cousins in the theatre some two hundred years ago, the present recording is indicated.

R.

Schwartz: A Tree Grows in Brooklyn. Shirley Booth, Johnny Johnston, Marcia Van Dyke with supporting cast, chorus and orchestra directed by Max Goberman. 8-10" discs in album (C-MM-1000) \$9.95. 8-7" discs in box (øC-A-1000) \$9.70. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4405) \$5.45.

Most recordings of musical-show highlights would seem to have an appeal limited to those who had seen the production in the theater. Here of late, and by that we mean since the coming of LP, the recording companies have gone to no end of trouble to give that "two-seats-on-the-aisle" quality to these recordings, and so we find them more than adequate compensation for having missed this or that musical.

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, as a musical, departs occasionally from the story-line of the novel by Betty Smith but, as plots should in this type of entertainment, it rarely gets in the way of the music and the lyrics. These last items can be enjoyed to full advantage in this superb recording. Miss Booth's philosophical *Love is the Reason*, her bit of reminiscence—*He Had Refinement*, and her bout with disillusionment—*Is That My Prince?* provide three intensely comic interludes in the generally pleasant turn-of-the-century atmosphere furnished by Johnny Johnston and Marcia Van Dyke in such numbers as *Growing Pains*; *Make the Man Love Me*; *I'm Like a New Broom*; and *I'll Buy You a Star*.

Rodgers: The King and I. Gertrude Lawrence, Dorothy Sarnoff, Doretta Morrow, and Yul Brynner with orchestra conducted by Frederick Dvornch. 6-10" discs in album (D-DA-876) \$8.75. 6-7" discs in box (øD-9-260) \$6.05. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9008) \$5.85.

Rodgers: The King and I. Dinah Shore, Patrice Munsel, Tony Martin, and Robert Merrill with Al Goodman and his Orchestra and Henri Rene and his Orchestra. 5-10" discs in album (V-K-30) \$5.51. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WK-30) \$4.82. 1-12" disc (*V-LK-1022) \$4.19.

"The King and I," one of the latest smash-hits on Broadway, comes to us in two versions: one with the

original cast; the other with some of RCA-Victor's most popular artists. Each has advantages and it is difficult to choose between them, since much depends on what one looks for in an item of this kind.

As for ourselves, we prefer the Decca original-cast recording because it has the continuity and feeling of production unity that one would expect from the Broadway players. The RCA-Victor album, on the other hand, although it has fine musical arrangements and first-rate singers from both the popular and the operatic field, does not have that "here-we-are-together" spirit that we think is essential. For those who like the voices of Dinah Shore, Tony Martin, Patrice Munsel and Robert Merrill, however, we must add that they all do their stints with ease and artistry. Yet Gertrude Lawrence and her associates give to "The King and I" something that is lacking in the other album, namely: "heart."

Spanish Folk Songs. Victoria de los Angeles (soprano) accompanied by Renata Tarrago (guitar). 4-10" discs in album (V-DM-1510) \$5.66. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1510) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-63) \$4.67.

The brilliant young Spanish soprano, Victoria de los Angeles, has chosen for her first domestic release a group of eleven Spanish folk songs. These are typical of the various Spanish provinces, ranging from Old Castile, Murcia and Mallorca to the Basque country, Andalusia and Catalonia. Most of them have an appropriate guitar accompaniment by the well-known guitarist, Renata Tarrego. With this recording are supplied the Spanish text of each song with an English translation.

Miss Angeles first became known to American music lovers through her splendid HMV recordings and so was not exactly a stranger when she made her debut in this country last autumn. Since that time she has appeared with great success with the Metropolitan Opera in "Faust," "Madame Butterfly" and "La Boheme." She has also had three most successful recitals at Carnegie Hall within the last six months.

German Song from the Minnesingers to the 17th Century. (Sung in German). Earl Rogers (tenor) accompanied by Rey de la Torre (guitar). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-90) \$5.45.

This unusual disc contains fifteen selections giving examples of an early period of German solo song. These songs for the most part just seemed to spring from the hearts of music loving persons and were carried throughout the country by traveling minstrels. Fortunately the words and music of some of them were written down in note books containing groups of them, and thus they have been saved for our enjoyment and edification. Earl Rogers, who specializes in music of this period, has recorded a group of them in a most attractive manner on the present record. He is ably supported by the Cuban guitarist, Rey de la Torre.

This LP disc will have a limited appeal, but for

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

the small group of students and collectors of such music it will be highly attractive.

Songs My Mother Taught Me. Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Milton Katims. 4-10" discs in album (V-DM-1498) \$5.66. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1498) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-59) \$4.67.

Miss Stevens has chosen for this collection of songs a group of well-known and well-beloved ballads that should please her great host of admirers. RCA Victor issues them under the title of Dvorák's famous *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, which is the first song in the group. The others are *Flow Gently, Sweet Afton*; *Danny Boy*; *Smilin' Through*; *Mighty Lak' a Rose*; *Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral*; *All Through the Night*; and *Brahms' Cradle Song*. Miss Stevens sings all of them in English, and she is well supported by an adequate orchestra.

Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras, No. 5. (Sung in Portuguese). Licia Albanese (soprano) with eight 'celli and bass conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (V-12-3277) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3277) \$1.16.

Bidu Sayão's recording of this work, issued some years ago, was one of the largest-selling single discs issued in the classic line in recent years. Licia Albanese's newly released version should do almost as well in furnishing the rising generation of music lovers, who may never have heard this unusual, haunting composition, with the thrill of discovery. We have always been faithful to Mme. Sayão's interpretation of the work and still think she has invested it with a trifle more warmth and color than Licia Albanese does. However, Mme. Albanese's singing, except for the slight quibble already mentioned, is exceptional on this disc and, by virtue of Leopold Stokowski's assistance and a beautiful recording job, should create many new admirers.

Mr. Imperium. Ezio Pinza (basso) and Fran Warren (soprano) with Orchestra conducted by Johnny Green. 3-10" discs in album (V-DM-1502) \$4.50. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1502) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-61) \$4.67.

In this review the LP disc listed above was considered. It contains *September Song* and *Yesterdays* which were issued on single discs last month (V-10-3256 and øV-49-3256). These selections are not included in the 45 and 78 rpm albums released this month. The LP disc contains in addition to selections just mentioned the following songs from Mr. Pinza's first M-G-M picture, "Mr. Imperium": *Andiamo*; *My Love and My Mule*; *Let Me Look At You*; and *You Belong to My Heart* and these pieces from other popular films: *One Night of Love* and *With a Song In My Heart*.

We would say that the success of the present disc will be measured by the success of "Mr. Imperium." We only know what we have read about the picture;

it has not as yet been shown in any of our local theatres.

Gershwin: Highlights from "Porgy and Bess." Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) and Robert Merrill (baritone) with the Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Robert Russell Bennett. 4-12" discs in album (V-DM-1496) \$6.29. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1496) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1124) \$5.72.

Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* lives on in its popularity with a great section of the American public. Selections from it are continually heard in the concert hall and over the air. Thus it would seem that the excerpts on the present records should find a ready welcome almost everywhere. Miss Stevens and Mr. Merrill with the aid of the famous Robert Shaw Chorale have brought these familiar pieces to us with renewed life and in a most appropriate manner. RCA Victor has supplied excellent reproduction throughout.

The selections are: *Summertime*; *A Woman Is a Sometime Thing*; *Gone, Gone, Gone*; *My Man's Gone Now*; *I Got Plenty O' Nuttin'*; *Bess, You Is My Woman Now*; *It Ain't Necessarily So*; and *Where Is My Bess?*

Neapolitan Folk Songs. Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 3-10" discs in album (V-DM-1525) \$4.50. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1525) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-72) \$4.67.

Muttetti di lu paliu. (Trad.—arr. Favara). One side, and **Abballati** (Trad.—arr. Favara). Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Renato Cellini. 1-10" disc (V-10-3268) \$1.16. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3268) \$1.16.

Cantu a timuni (Trad.—arr. Favara). One side, and **A la valletlungnisa** (Trad.—arr. Favara). Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Renato Cellini. 1-10" disc (V-10-3269) \$1.16. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3269) \$1.16.

Two of Italy's most popular tenors devote their talents to folk songs of their native land this month—Tagliavini has chosen well-known Neapolitan ballads and Stefano sings seldom heard traditional Sicilian airs. Americans will doubtless prefer the Neapolitan selections because of their familiarity. They are: *Dicitencello Vuje*; *Pizzichi e vase*; *Mamma mia che vo' sape*; *Senza niscuno*; *Mattinata*; and *Amuri*.

Catches and Glee's of the English Restoration. Roger Lewis, Syd Alexander (tenors); Sanford Walker (baritone); Peter Warme (basso). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3008) \$5.95.

These Catches and Glee's might very appropriately have been interpolated in the Comedies that graced the boards during the English Restoration. They would have been very much in character. The pres-

ent disc will be of interest to students of that gay and naughty period. It is not suggested as entertainment for the unsophisticated.

PIANO



Chopin: (4) Scherzos. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-189) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1132) \$5.72.

A Chopin Recital. Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-317) \$4.95.

Chopin: Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58. One side, and **Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9.** Guiomar Novães (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6710) \$5.95.

Lovers of Chopin's music have here a triple treat. Each of these discs is played by an outstanding artist, and the majority of the selections played are "firsts"—at least on LP. In addition, Schumann's delightful *Carnaval* shares honors with Chopin's *Sonata No. 3* on the Vox disc.

There are as many ways of interpreting Chopin as there are persons to play his work and the same thing goes for audience reaction. As for ourselves, we do not believe that any one school of playing does justice to his music. The compositions rendered here all have their proper exponents—the *Scherzos* are played with Rubinstein's fine sense of the dramatic and the light touch (when needed); the *Mazurkas* and other short works on the Backhaus disc are treated with the right proportions of strength and delicacy; and the seldom-heard *Sonata No. 3*, as performed by Miss Novães with an ease that belies the technical difficulties involved, should please all with its variety of moods. Her rendition of *Carnaval* does not stand on the same level with Myra Hess', but it is beautifully accomplished, especially in the lyrical passages.

Mozart: Sonata in D, K. 488. Amparo and José Iturbi (duo-pianists). 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1516) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1516) \$3.99. Coupled with **Chabrier: Trois Valses Romantiques.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1135) \$5.72.

Chabrier: Trois Valses Romantiques. Amparo and José Iturbi (duo-pianists). 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1501) \$2.83. Coupled with **Mozart: Sonata in D, K. 488.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1135) \$5.72.

For this review the LP disc containing both of the selections listed above was considered.

There is little in the literature for two pianos—most selections played by duo-pianists are especially arranged. However, the selections on the present LP disc were all written for two pianos. The Mozart *Sonata in D* was composed for a student of the composer and was first played by teacher and scholar in 1782. It is a gay piece but one that invites careful consideration. Alfred Einstein, the great authority on Mozart, says that it is an "entertaining work" but that "at the same time it is one of the most profound and most mature of all of Mozart's compositions." The

Chabrier Waltzes are light pleasing trifles that may be easily enjoyed without much effort on the part of the listener.

The Iturbis give the impression that they are thoroughly enjoying playing this music and doubtless their many admirers will share their enjoyment when they listen to these recorded performances. RCA Victor provides most faithful reproduction.



ORGAN

Frescobaldi: Fiori Musicali (Vol. I—Messa delli Apostoli). Robert Noehren (organ). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-111) \$5.45.

Hindemith: Three Sonatas for Organ. Robert Noehren (organ). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-103) \$5.45.

The distinguished series of organ records by Robert Noehren for Allegro continues this month with two of the best yet issued. The Frescobaldi disc will be of interest to both student and layman. The student will find it among the most interesting of all organ records because the registration, measure by measure, is given completely, and the stoplist of the organ is also given. He can therefore follow the music and know exactly how Mr. Noehren registers. Anyone interested in organ music will enjoy the disc for the music it offers. The *Fiori Musicali* (musical flowers) published in 1635 consists chiefly of Kyries, Toccatas, Ricercars, and Canzonas to accompany three different Masses of the Church. The present recording is devoted to a performance of the *Messa delli Apostoli*, and is the first of three releases which will present the complete *Fiori Musicali*. The disc has separation grooves between each of the sixteen sections, which are of course rather short. The music is truly beautiful and Noehren plays it splendidly. The reproduction is good, of the close-to variety with no resonance, but very accurate and revealing. If possible, play this at a fairly high volume level and listen to it from the next room. The effect is very fine in that case, for the fidelity of the record and the balance are both good.

The Hindemith *Sonatas* (his entire three are on this one disc) will be a tough nut to crack for most listeners, and whether or not one will find it worth while is a question. Organists will be interested, but the rest of the folks may settle for something more accessible. The music is actually rather baroque in character except for its dissonance, but its appeal is very limited. Noehren's performance is severe, reproduction good.

The organ used for these discs is that of Grace Episcopal Church in Sandusky, Ohio—an old Johnson organ of 1893 completely rebuilt by the Schlicker Company of Buffalo in 1950. All the pipes are either new or have been completely revoiced; however the mechanical action was retained (and completely renewed). This is a most interesting instrument and sounds something like the better German baroque organs—might even sound exactly like them if building resonance were present.

S.

Bach: Toccata and Fugue in D minor, and **Bach:** Prelude and Fugue in D. One side, and **Franck:** Pastorale, Op. 19, No. 4 (From "Six pièces pour grand orgue"), and **Franck:** Fantaisie in A (From "Trois pièces pour grand orgue"). Jeanne Demessieux (organ). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-319) \$5.95.

Recorded at St. Mark's, North Audley Street, London, this disc is one with the familiar ring of a conventional large church organ of rather romantic design being played by a typical virtuoso organist. Those who like a good, juicy organ tone, with a deep churchy feeling, will get a lot of enjoyment from this one. The performance of the well-worn *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*, without which it seems no recital is complete, is mannered to a degree—a greater degree in the Toccata and a lesser degree in the Fugue (see TNR Apr. '48). The *Prelude and Fugue in D* is a magnificent work in this form and we liked the performance very much. But it is in the Franck music that this artist has the most to say. The lovely *Pastorale* is played with becoming registration and feeling for the music, and the *Fantaisie* is also exemplary in style. The reproduction has plenty of atmosphere and is good in fidelity if a bit on the thick side. There is a bad splicing in the D major Fugue, for which London's engineers should be chastised; otherwise the disc is most effective.

It is to the lasting credit of Franck that his efforts and example laid the foundation for, and played so enormous a part in, the rejuvenation of the French school of organ music that today shows such vitality. With the exception of Couperin and his predecessors, French organ music may be said to begin with Franck—as for most folks today it actually does. His music is a highly developed one of original harmony, colorful and romantic. And his music has the easy feeling of improvisation clothed in melody of immediate appeal. It is romantic organ music of the best order, a product of a great man.

S.



DICTION

Fry: *The Lady's Not For Burning*. John Gielgud, Pamela Brown and supporting cast directed by John Gielgud. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-110) \$11.70.

We rather think that those persons who are interested in the theatre will agree that Christopher Fry's play, "The Lady's Not For Burning," is a truly great play. It had a reasonable success in New York but did not last very long on the road. While the plot is quite simple and very easy to follow, Fry's exquisite poetry cannot be appreciated at first hearing. We feel that the producers made a great mistake by not urging everyone, who intended to see the play, to read it first. (It is available in book form published by Oxford University Press.) We made the mistake of seeing it before we read it and so we speak from experience. It is true, as George Jean Nathan says, "... the beautiful sounds of words and the smooth roll of sentences

and the fireworks their flame can set alight" are surely a joy to the ear, but to have in mind their full meaning adds at least seventy-five percent to their enjoyment.

Thus "The Lady's Not For Burning" is just the sort of play that should be made available on records. With such a splendid recording as is now available one may listen to Fry's poetry over and over again until one fully appreciates it and thus may enjoy it thoroughly. This is not the sort of recording that one will play through once and file away in his library. If he is interested enough to purchase it, he will play it again and again and will find that each new playing will bring out more beauty and bring to light the many subtleties with which it abounds.



HARPSICHORD

Bach: *Das Wohltemperierte Clavier* ("The Well-Tempered Clavier") (Book I). (Preludes and Fugues Nos. 17 to 24). Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 6-12" discs in album (V-DM-1517) \$8.89. 6-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1517) \$7.44. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1136) \$5.72.

Although we have here an event of great musical importance, we feel that it is only necessary to record the fact that the third installment of Mme. Landowska's monumental recording of Bach's *Wohltemperierte Clavier* has been released. The playing is impeccable and the reproduction outstanding.



MISCELLANEOUS

The Louis Armstrong Story (in 4 vols.). Louis Armstrong (cornet and vocals) with featured soloists. 4-12" discs (*C-ML-54383 to *C-ML-54386) \$5.45 each. 24-7" discs (6 per box) in 4 boxes (øC-B-237 to øC-B-240) \$5.69 per box.

Vol. I. *Louis Armstrong and his Hot Five*.

Vol. II. *Louis Armstrong and his Hot Seven*.

Vol. III. *Louis Armstrong and Earl Hines*.

Vol. IV. *Louis Armstrong Favorites*.

Many persons feel that Louis Armstrong was the greatest jazz musician who ever lived; undoubtedly there are few who will deny that he was one of the "elite" personages in le jazz hot. Louis recorded literally hundreds of numbers for the old Okeh label, which was part of the assets of the Columbia Phonograph Co. when it was purchased by CBS. Columbia had previously re-issued many of these choice items on 78's and now makes them available on 45 and LP under the title "The Louis Armstrong Story." This reviewer is amazed to note that the numbers sound better on 45's and LP than they do on 78's—this in spite of the fact that they were dubbed from original 78 masters.

There is a whale of a lot of jazz contained in these four volumes! It may come as a revelation to the novice to discover that Harry James and Ralph Flanagan did not invent modern music; somewhere in this

collection you can hear practically every swing lick—invented by the one and only King Louis Armstrong—and played by him back in 1925!

Vol. I contains: *Muskat Ramble*, *Heebie Jeebies*, *Gut Bucket Blues*, *Cornet Chop Suey*, *Ory's Creole Trombone* and seven others; Vol. II contains: *Potato Head Blues*, *Wild Man Blues*, *S. O. L. Blues*, *Alligator Crawl*, *12th Street Rag* and seven others; Vol. III contains *Weather Bird*, *Muggles*, *St. James Infirmary*, *Tight Like This*, *West End Blues*, *Squeeze Me* and six others; and Vol. IV contains *Knockin' a Jug*, *Body and Soul*, *Black and Blue*, *Shine*, *Lazy River*, *Dear Old Southland*, *Confessin'* and five others. There are 48 numbers in all, and not a deadhead in the lot. J.

Gabrieli: (7) Canzonas for Single and Double Brass Choirs. New York Brass Ensemble conducted by Samuel Baron. 1-12" disc (*ESOTERIC-LP-503) \$6.50.

The New York Brass Ensemble was organized in 1946 at the Juilliard School of Music by Julian Menken and made its radio debut on the CBS "Juilliard Broadcast Series" in 1948. That fine group of musicians has appeared successfully at Town Hall, the Library of Congress, and was presented last year by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge at the Pittsfield, Mass., festival of chamber music. The Ensemble consists of four trumpets, two French horns, two trombones and tuba.

For this recording seven canzonas by the 16th century Italian organist and composer, Giovanni Gabrieli, were selected. The first four are for single choir and were written for various religious and state occasions. The final three are examples of Gabrieli's antiphonal style; music written for two choirs of instruments playing sometimes separately, sometimes together, and often in dialogue. They were recorded by two separate choirs and the "echo" effect was obtained by placing the choirs at opposite ends of the recording studio (about 100 feet apart) with the conductor midway between them.

We found this a fascinating disc, but we rather think that \$6.50 is a rather steep price for it. However, we suppose that the answer to the high price is that it will appeal to only a few very discerning music lovers and thus, even at the price, it is doubtful whether it will be a commercial success.

Bach: (15) Two-Part Inventions. Ralph Kirkpatrick (clavichord). 1-10" disc (*CH-CHS-1088) \$4.67.

This little LP disc will have a limited appeal. It contains a series of very short pieces that Bach composed for the instruction of his son, Wilhelm Friedemann, in the art of keyboard playing. Students of Bach, and particularly discerning music lovers, will probably find the present record interesting, but others should hear it before they purchase it.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—A&H, AL—Allegro, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DG—Deutsche Grammophon, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HS—Haydn Society, HW—Hargall, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, T—Telefunken, V—Victor, VX—Vox, WEST—Westminster, and W—Woodwind.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 @ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16

see below B-4
Berling-Fant p. 9
Nabucco p. 10

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 5

JULY, 1951

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

IN APRIL 1951 we said that "The number of new releases seems to be leveling off..." The record manufacturers must have taken that as a complaint that they were falling down on the job, for they have now swamped us again, and in all this heat, too! Without further ado, then, we will get right to the reviews.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving request for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 1/3 r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Victor Herbert Favorites. Risë Stevens with RCA Victor Orchestra and Chorus—Black. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-79) \$4.67. (TNR Oct. '50).

Mozart: Symphony No. 36 in C, K. 425 ("Linz"). One side, and Mozart: Symphony No. 39 in E-flat, K. 543. Boston Symphony Orchestra—Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1141) \$5.72. (TNR July '50 & Aug. '50).

Musical Comedy Medleys. Boston Pops Orchestra—Fiedler. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-97) \$4.67. (TNR Oct. '50).

Onward, Christian Soldiers. RCA Victor Chorale—Shaw. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-85) \$4.67. (TNR Oct. '49).

Operatic Recital. Claudia Muzio with orchestra—Molajoli. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4404) \$5.45. (TNR July '36).

Night and Day. Show Hits by Cole Porter. Allan Jones with chorus and orchestra—Sinatra. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1140) \$5.72. (TNR Apr. '46).

Gems from Sigmund Romberg Shows—Vol. I. Soloists with orchestra and chorus—Romberg. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-89) \$4.67. (TNR May '46).

Gems from Sigmund Romberg Shows—Vol. III. Soloists with Robert Shaw Chorale and orchestra—Romberg. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-74) \$4.67. (TNR Nov. '50).

Waltzing with Romberg. Orchestra—Romberg. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-91). \$4.67. (TNR Dec. '47).

Schubert Songs for Male Chorus. RCA Victor Chorale of Men's Voices—Shaw. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-81) \$4.67. (TNR Apr. '50).

Shostakovich: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 35. Eileen Joyce with Hallé Orchestra—Heward. One side, and Prokofiev: Concerto No. 3 in C, Op. 26. Dimitri Mitropoulos with Robin Hood Dell Orchestra (Philadelphia)—Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4389) \$5.45. (TNR Feb. '43 & Feb. '47).

That Midnight Kiss. Mario Lanza with RCA Victor Orchestra—Callinicos and Sinatra. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-86) \$4.67. (TNR Oct. '49).

Operatic Arias and Duets from "The Toast of New Orleans." Mario Lanza with Elaine Malbin and RCA Victor Orchestra—Callinicos. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-75) \$4.67. (TNR Dec. '50).

Tschaikovsky: Francesca da Rimini, Op. 32. One side, and Tschaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Overture-Fantasia). N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra—Stokowski. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4381) \$5.45. (TNR Mar. '49 & May '50).

Brahms: Concerto in D, Op. 77. Yehudi Menuhin with the Lucerne Festival Orchestra—Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1142) \$5.72. (TNR June '50).

ORCHESTRA



Bruckner: Symphony No. 4 in E-flat ("Romantic"). Leipzig Symphony Orchestra conducted by Prof. Herman Abendroth. 2-12" discs in album (*URANIA-URLP-401) \$9.70.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 4 in E-flat ("Romantic"). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6930) \$5.95.

With these recordings of the Fourth, the LP lists now contain all Bruckner's symphonies from No. 3

through No. 8. Two recordings of the same Bruckner symphony in one month probably sets some kind of record for this industry. It sets another kind of record when one company gets the music on two sides of a disc, and another company uses four sides for the same thing. We will say that whatever merits the four-sided version may have, it is certainly not worth a higher price, and we would predict the early demise of this version.* Our task of appraising the two versions is simplified by the fact that we consider the Klemperer version the better interpretation and performance. The Vienna Symphony plays with greater precision, more lung power when needed, and more general finish than the Leipzig organization. Klemperer conducts with an intensity and a volcanic passion that are rare for him, and quite a bit different from his *Brandenburg Concertos* and other recordings. He doesn't waste any time tightening up the score, and his performance hangs together better than any Bruckner performance we have ever heard.

The Romantic is usually considered the most joyous and close-to-the-soil, and most melodic of all Bruckner's symphonies. We still like the *Seventh* as well, but feel the *Romantic* is an easier work to listen to. It is a good one to acquire first for those wishing to add Bruckner to their libraries. You will find the program notes on the Vox folder interesting and informative. One thing they point out is that if this work has a program, it was probably dreamed up after the work was written, and that Bruckner himself did not take the program seriously. It is therefore music to listen to. Just sit back and enjoy the vast span and breadth of his themes and thematic groups, the great, gradual climaxes, the long powerful sustained ecstasies with their chanting trumpets.

Herman Abendroth, once active as a recording conductor, here returns to the scene. His performance is somewhat broader than Klemperer's, and the reproduction of his set is a trifle more resonant. But the merits are not worth any more typesetting. We'll take Klemperer and take him gladly; it is a thrilling performance under his skilled hands. S.

(Just before going to press, we noted that the July issue of the Schwann LP catalog listed the Urania version of the Bruckner 4th as being available on a single 12-inch disc; however, the latest information we have been able to obtain is that our heading above is correct.)

Handel: The Triumph of Time and Truth—Symphonic Suite. Orchestral Society of Vienna with double wind choir conducted by Zoltan Fekete. 1-12" disc (*PERIOD-SPLP-525) \$5.95.

Handel: Jephtha—Suite. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony in C**. Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10066) \$4.85.

The *Triumph of Time and Truth* suite was fashioned from Handel's last major English Oratorio

which appeared in 1757, two years before his death. It is a work which unleashes powerful and impressive forces which portray the anguish of the mortal soul on its road to final salvation and reward. A moving late work of Handel, and one which serves Fekete well, he has arranged a suite that compares with the work Hamilton Harty and Thomas Beacham have done. It is done with perfect taste and skill, and is a legitimate and highly desirable addition to the orchestral repertoire. As it was not uncommon to have a ratio of 20 oboes and ten bassoons for ten violins and five 'celli in the Handelian orchestras, Fekete uses a double wind choir with some striking effects. The music is expertly played and well recorded.

Jephtha is another in Fekete's Handel suites, which include the music from Saul, Alceste, Judas Maccabaeus, Solomon, Joshua, and Esther. The first *Jephtha* suite has four movements comprising the highly dramatic Overture to *Jephtha*, a lovely Andantino heard in Solomon as the air "Beneath the vine or fig tree's shade," a brilliant Vivace taken from the chorus "Disdainful of danger" in *Judas Maccabaeus*, and finally the majestic Hallelujah Chorus from *Athalia*. Handel's original melody and harmony are well preserved by Fekete and the scoring is always in the Handel spirit.

The Haydn *Symphony in C* is one of a series of manuscript symphonies discovered about a decade ago, not listed by Breitkopf and Hartel. Fekete edited the finest of this group and has presented it in concert and now on records. It is a three movement work without minuet, presumably written during the late Esterhazy period. If there could be any doubt that it came from the pen of Haydn, there can be no doubt that a master of the highest calibre wrote it.

The Haydn symphony and *Jephtha* are played with fine style and finish by the Mozarteum orchestra and very well recorded. These two discs are something new in old music, and they are worthy of a place beside the greatest of the old works on your record shelf. Completely enjoyable music in every respect. S.

Hindemith: Philharmonic Concerto (Variations for Orchestra). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Hindemith. One side, and **Hindemith: Apparebit Repentina Dies**. Choir of the Vienna Singakademie with members of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8134) \$4.98.

Philharmonic Concerto was written for a definite occasion, the fiftieth anniversary of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Hindemith has announced that he likes to write music for a purpose or occasion, and no better occasion could present itself than to display the brilliance of one of the world's greatest orchestras. The question of form answered itself. The purpose demanded a set of variations, each conceived so as to show off the different sections of the orchestra. Two variations for full orchestra frame the set, while the entire arsenal of contrapuntal devices is used to iso-

late single groups or instruments. The work is pervaded with the gay self-confidence of a creator at the height of his powers, to whom craftsmanship and inspiration are synonyms. The music is a little difficult because of its complexity, and it is somewhat dissonant; but its exuberance makes it easier to grasp, and after a few playings it appears to be quite a worthwhile piece. We would assume the performance to be accurate; the reproduction is very good.

To an anonymous poem written before 700 A.D. concerning the Last Judgment, Hindemith has written a powerful, though rather severe, choral setting which undeniably establishes the mood. One is inclined, at first, to doubt that this music will be worthy of the text, but as it progresses the force is there. Stravinsky, Poulenc, Hindemith, and other contemporaries have a way of blending the modern method with the medieval, as though the music of the middle ages appears in modern dress—and a not unbecoming dress. It is a matter of simplicity, a rather Gregorian feeling for line, and a superior modern technique. This sort of thing does not have the serenity of older music. It is characteristic of our times and may some day in the future be thought of as great music. At present most authorities on sacred music consider it an interesting curiosity of fine craftsmanship. The work is scored for four French horns, two trumpets, three trombones, one bass tuba, and choir. The brass writing is excellent. It is performed with enthusiasm, although the diction is not too good and the choir at times seems to strain for the effects. Reproduction is satisfactory. S.

Barber: Symphony No. 2, Op. 19. The New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Samuel Barber. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-334) \$4.95.

Barber: Medea, Op. 23—Ballet Suite. The New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Samuel Barber. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-333) \$4.95.

One of our finest contemporary composers is here represented with two splendid works. The *Symphony No. 2* is, for one thing, a good example of modern music in that it is built on rather traditional lines using a sonata-form first movement, and variations and fugato in the third movement. At the same time the expression is along modern lines and methods—those that have found general acceptance among contemporary composers. In other words, this symphony is not radical in method nor approach, but uses accepted forms both old and new. It is not easy to grasp on first hearing, but its message is worth repetition, and the chances are better than fair that this work will some day be a part of the standard orchestral repertoire. If you have a feeling for new music, this work will interest you.

The score of *Medea* was commissioned for Martha Graham and was first danced by her and her company in 1946. Miss Graham uses the title "Cave of the Heart" for her ballet, but the composer has preferred to use the original source of the idea as the title for the

suite for full orchestra. Neither Miss Graham nor the composer wished to use the *Medea-Jason* legend literally in the ballet. One of the less attractive of dramatic personae of "The Age of Fable," *Medea* is the lurid symbol of resourceful cruelty. In the ballet the mythical figures serve to project psychological states of jealousy and vengeance which are timeless. There are two time levels, therefore, and as the ballet progresses we see first the figures of Greek tragedy and then modern man and woman, caught in the nets of jealousy and destructive love; at the end they resume their mythical quality. In both the dancing and the music, archaic and contemporary idioms are used.

We found this music highly descriptive and very absorbing. Barber seems to have accomplished with notable success what he set out to do. *Medea* is indeed a fine modern ballet suite. We found it more interesting and palatable than most late Stravinsky. Both *Medea* and the *Symphony No. 2* are composer-conducted and, presumably, what they are supposed to be at their best. We can imagine more adroit orchestral playing by a major American orchestra, but the reproduction is splendid. S.

Milhaud: Serenade for Orchestra (1921). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. And **Milhaud: Five Studies for Piano and Orchestra (1920).** Paul Badura-Skoda (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One side, and **Milhaud: Maximilian—Suite (1932),** and **Milhaud: Trois Rag Caprices (1927).** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5051) \$5.95.

Nicolas Slonimsky, in his accompanying notes, has a paragraph which should be of interest to music lovers, for it helps explain a lot about modern music, and about one of its greatest composers, Darius Milhaud. It follows:

"The decisive step in twentieth-century music was the acceptance of dissonance as a legitimate part of the musical vocabulary. For Milhaud, it was never dissonance for dissonance's sake. He never rejected tonality as the foundation of music, whether old or modern. What he did, was to express tonality in simultaneous timing, in other words, in polytonality. The polyphony of the old masters was a combination of different melodies; the polytonality of the twentieth-century masters, such as Milhaud, is a polyphony of chords. As Milhaud demonstrated in a basic article on polytonality, several keys are present simultaneously even in the works of Bach, at least by implication. The expansion into explicit use of several keys simultaneously was to him—and to most of twentieth-century music lovers—a logical development."

Milhaud never fails to date all his compositions, and the present ones range from 1920 to 1932, as indicated above. There is always, in Milhaud's music, the feeling of logic and clarity of expression. Even the most complex of his music has a directness and appeal that is unique. The works on this disc are no excep-

tion, and we enjoyed every one. The *Maximilian Suite* is made up of symphonic interludes from the opera—after a novel by Franz Werfel about the unfortunate Emperor of Mexico. In this music the complex harmony of polytonal combinations reaches its height, and it is therefore the least accessible music on the disc. But it is powerful and intriguing. *Serenade, Five Studies*, and *Three Caprices* are all comprised of short sections which make for easy listening, and the variety of invention among them all is quite amazing.

The performances of this music under Swoboda are top-notch with plenty of snap and sparkle, and the reproduction is of the very best. This disc is from every standpoint highly worth while.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 11. Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Desarzens. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1080) \$5.95.

This is the first recording of this work that we have heard. We understand that there is another recording of it by the Stuttgart Philharmonic under Van Hoogstraten, but we have never come across it. It would certainly have to be an extraordinary one if it is better than the present version by the Winterthur Symphony with its permanent conductor, Victor Desarzens. We have nothing but praise for the playing of this fine symphony and for the high fidelity of the reproduction that Concert Hall has accomplished.

Mendelssohn's *Symphony No. 1 in C minor* is really a revised version of the 13th and last of a series of sinfonias for strings the composer wrote before he was 15 years of age, and it is the first of five symphonies that he wrote for full symphony orchestra. It is in the style of Mozart and its fresh new melodies are projected with the youthful enthusiasm of the young composer. It is not profound but it is a joy to listen to. This new LP record will bring to many music lovers some delightful music that many of them will hear for the first time.

K. P. E. Bach: Symphony No. 1 in D and K. P. E. Bach: Symphony No. 3 in C. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One side, and **K. P. E. Bach: Concerto in A minor for Piano and Orchestra.** Franz Holletschek (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5040) \$5.95.

K. P. E. Bach: Symphony No. 1 in D and K. P. E. Bach: Symphony No. 3 in C. One side, and **J. C. Bach: Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dr. Felix Guenther. 1-12" disc (*BACH GUILD-BG-504) \$5.95.

It never rains but it pours! This month we have two excellent recordings of K. P. E. Bach's Symphonies Nos. 1 and 3 by the same orchestra. It becomes pretty much a personal matter as to whether you prefer Swoboda's version or Guenther's. As far as we are concerned, we have no choice; we are very happy with either of them. However, for the coupling

we found the K. P. E. Bach's *Concerto in A minor*, which Swoboda played from a manuscript that he found in the *Musikakademie* in Vienna, of particular charm and interest. Thus, for this reason and no other, we prefer the Westminster disc to the Bach Guild one.

Hindemith: Konzertmusik for Piano, Brass and Harps.

Arthur Balsam (piano) with the Concert Hall Orchestra conducted by Walter Koehr. One side, and **Hindemith: Trauermusik for Viola and Orchestra.** Walter Gerhart (viola) with the Concert Hall Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1067) \$5.95.

Paul Hindemith's music has steadily gained worldwide recognition since the early 1920's, when as a viola player with the famous Amar String Quartet he wrote music for that organization. His *String Quartet No. 2*, written for that group brought him fame beyond his native Germany. Since that time he has been a most prolific composer and has written in many forms. The two selections on the present disc should help in making this distinguished musician better known and appreciated wherever they are heard. Both of them are easy to listen to and should have a wide appeal among discerning music lovers. The *Konzertmusik*, while modern in idiom, has much of the appeal of an 18th century concerto grosso. The *Trauermusik*, which dates from 1937, was written to commemorate the death of George V and contains lovely melodies in a somber vein—a delightful restful piece for moments of relaxation.

The artists who have made the present recordings have achieved splendid performances and the reproduction is highly satisfactory.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Le Coq d'Or—Introduction and March; and Moussorgsky: Khovantchina—Prelude. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34.** Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Desarzens. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1106) \$5.95.

If you are in the mood for Rimsky-Korsakov and Moussorgsky the present disc will supply some of the best orchestral music by these Russian composers. The Winterthur Symphony gives a thrilling and full-blooded performance of these exciting works and is blessed with excellent reproduction. Perhaps the recording may be a bit too loud for some listeners, but this can easily be taken care of by adjusting the volume control on your phonograph. With a high fidelity reproducing instrument one can place himself right in the middle of a great symphony orchestra if he cares to with this remarkable LP disc.

Pergolesi: Concertino in F minor. One side, and **Respighi: Antiche Danze ed Arie per Liuto, Suite No. 3.** Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-312) \$5.95.

Just about two centuries intervened between these two compositions—Pergolesi died at the age of twenty-six in 1736 and Respighi wrote his *Ancient Airs and*

Dances, Suite No. 3 in 1931. The Respighi work consists of free transcriptions of four compositions from the 16th and 17th centuries. Thus the recent work is a throw-back of a century or two before the earlier one which is now over two hundred years old. It is not very important, but the present disc spans in a way four centuries of Italian music. If you find ancient melodies in the Italian mood to your liking then you will probably find this LP disc highly pleasing. The reproduction is London *ffrr*.

Carnegie Pops Program II. Carnegie Pops Orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 3-7" discs in box (©C-A-1001) \$3.95. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2176) \$4.

July is the month of "pop" concerts all over the nation. Columbia makes available at this time the means of having your concert at home, minus the crowds. After the success of the first volume (*C-ML-4118), a second one by Carnegie Pops Orchestra was only a question of time. Here it is, with many old favorites, including: *Prelude in G minor* (Rachmaninoff); *Rosamunde—Entr'acte* (Schubert); *Berceuse and Dance Song* (Liadov); *Russian Sailors' Dance* (Glière); *Dagger Dance* (Herbert); *Molly on the Shore*; and *Londonderry Air*.

Holiday in Vienna (A Program of Strauss and Lanner Waltzes). Alexander Schneider String Ensemble. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2179) \$4.

Just the thing for a summer evening! Here are delightful waltzes played, not by an overpowering super-orchestra, but by a string ensemble which, more than likely, represents the typical instrumentation of the days when these waltzes were new. Among the old favorites—such as *Emperor Waltz* and *Artist's Life—Strauss' Beautiful May, First and Last*, and *Solon* are included. Lanner, referred to as "the Mozart of dance music," is represented by *Court Ball Dances*; *Night Waltz*; *Pulse of Life*; *Viennese Waltz*; and *Coronation Waltz*.

CONCERTO



K. P. E. Bach: Concerto in D minor for Piano and Orchestra. Artur Balsam (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Desarzens. One and one-half sides, and **K. P. E. Bach: Trio Sonata in E-flat**, and **K. P. E. Bach: Trio Sonata in B-flat.** Henri Druart (clarinet); Aimée van de Wiele (harpischord); Maurice Alard (bassoon). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1074) \$5.95.

Very little of the music of K. P. E. Bach, the second son of Johann Sebastian, has been recorded and so the present LP disc is very welcome. K. P. E. developed the sonata form to the point where it was taken up by Haydn and Mozart and for sometime his fame eclipsed that of his famous father.

The selections on the present disc are typical of the music of the younger Bach, and, as played by the able artists who have recorded them, should be ac-

ceptable to all music lovers who are interested in music of this period. They have been most faithfully recorded by Concert Hall.

Mozart: Concerto No. 9 in E-flat for Piano and Orchestra, K. 271 ("Jeunehomme"). Lili Kraus (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Fantasia in C minor, K. 475.** Lili Kraus (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9525) \$5.85.

Mozart: Concerto No. 12 in A for Piano and Orchestra, K. 414. Margaret Knittel (piano) with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Albert. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto in E-flat for Two Pianos and Orchestra, K. 365.** Heinz Schröter and Hans Altmann (pianos) with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10007) \$4.85.

Mozart: Concerto No. 17 in G for Piano and Orchestra, K. 453. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 19 in F for Piano and Orchestra, K. 459.** Leonid Hambro (piano) with the Oklahoma City Orchestra conducted by Victor Alessandro. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3011) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 27 in B-flat for Piano and Orchestra, K. 595. Andor Foldes (piano) with the Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Arthur Goldschmidt. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: (10) Variations on "Unser Dummer Poebel Meint," K. 455.** Andor Foldes (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6810) \$5.95.

The current bonanza of Mozart recordings continues this month with four new LP's containing six piano concertos. Nos. 12 and 27 appear for the first time on LP. The general level of excellence is quite high for all four of these discs. The piano playing of Lili Kraus and of Leonid Hambro is exceptionally fine. Hambro's record of the 17th and 19th is almost ideal, except only for the orchestral accompaniment which we felt was rather heavy and lacking in sparkle and style. It is not actually bad orchestral playing and may not annoy you, but it is not of the same quality as the soloist's playing. The reproduction is good. Competitive versions of the 17th are by Gaby Casadesus and Ralph Kirkpatrick; of the 19th by Clara Haskil and Lili Kraus. Because of the advantageous coupling, we would recommend the Hambro disc.

Lili Kraus has for competition on the 9th, Gaby Casadesus whose performance is alone on a 12" disc, while Miss Kraus throws in the *Fantasia in C minor* as a filler. The reproduction has more resonance in the Kraus version. As for the performances, Gaby is a bit more restrained, Lili plays a bit more broadly. Both are mighty good Mozart. Tough choice here, but better reproduction and the extra piece on the disc should give it to Kraus.

The Mercury disc is a good buy, what with a piano concerto and a two-piano concerto back to back for \$4.85; if the excellence of the performances were

a little better, it would really be a bargain. However, Knittel has a rather heavy hand with Mozart, plays well but is not Mozartean in conception. She has no competitive performances on LP (yet). The two-piano concerto comes off second best to the Vronsky and Babin version for Columbia as a performance. Both sides of the Mercury disc feature somewhat annoying piano reproduction, hard, clanging, and not in keeping with the music. Mercury's glassy string tone is in evidence too. Better listen to this one before you purchase.

By far the most interesting musically is the 27th, the last of Mozart's piano concertos. This sublime work is subtle beyond description and bears many repeated hearings. Foldes is extremely accurate and faithful to the score; he could be a little warmer, but his musicianship is of the highest. The accompaniment is good, and the reproduction lacks only a shade of resonance to make it ideal. In all it is a fine disc, with an interesting filler for good measure. No competitive versions. S.

Chausson: Concerto in D for Violin, Piano and String Quartet, Op. 21. Louis Kaufman (violin); Artur Balsam (piano); with the Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1071) \$5.95.

It is good to have this lovely Chausson chamber work, really a sextet for piano and strings, available on LP discs. We recall a fine recording of it on 78 rpm with Heifetz, Sanromá and the Musical Art Quartet.

The music of this work is quite reminiscent of César Franck, Chausson's teacher and greatest influence. Listening to it, Franck's *Variations Symphoniques* and *Piano Quintet* come irresistibly to one's mind. Chausson was also said to have felt the influence of Wagner and Debussy. Nevertheless, with all these influences, Chausson has a charm and a fluency which were his own special gifts and which made his early death a bitter blow to French music of the latter half of the 19th century.

The artists who have made the present recording are fully adequate for their task, and the result should satisfy even the most discerning music lover. Reproduction—excellent.

Mozart: Concerto in D for Flute and Orchestra, K. 314. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Andante in C for Flute and Orchestra, K. 315.** Aurele Nicolet (flute) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-10" disc (*CH-CHS-1073) \$4.67.

It is said that Mozart had no particular love for the flute, but we can hardly agree with that statement after listening to this really delightful little *Concerto in D*. Certainly he has written some gay and thoroughly charming music and has given the flutist every opportunity to display his instrument. In this recording Aurele Nicolet demonstrates his rare ability as a soloist and he is given splendid support by the famous Winterthur Symphony under the able direction of Henry Swoboda. Reproduction—excellent.

Bach: Concerto in C for Two Harpsichords and Orchestra. Hans Andreae, Theodor Sack (harpsichords) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Dehinden. One side, and **Haydn: Concerto in F for Violin and Harpsichord.** Peter Rybar (violin) and Hans Andreae (harpsichord) with the Concert Hall Chamber Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1081) \$5.95.

Both Bach and Haydn composed innumerable concertos for various instruments and orchestra. The present Concert Hall LP disc contains two very interesting ones, both played by fine artists and especially well recorded. For those music lovers who like to turn their thoughts back to an age long since past this excellent and unusual LP disc is indicated.

K. P. E. Bach: Concerto in A minor for Piano and Orchestra. Franz Holletschek (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One side, and **K. P. E. Bach: Symphony No. 1 in D**, and **K. P. E. Bach: Symphony No. 3 in C.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5040) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras No. 1. One side, and **Villa-Lobos: Chôros No. 4** and **Villa-Lobos: Chôros No. 7.** Chamber groups conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8147) \$4.98.

Those of our readers who know and admire Heitor Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5*, popularized some years ago by Bidu Sayão's brilliant rendition (C-71670D) and more recently by Licia Albanese (V-12-3277 or øV-49-3277), have undoubtedly wondered about the other *Bachianas Brasileiras* in this series. Capitol records have done much to bring the music of South America's foremost composer to the attention of music lovers and have here given us some unusual and arresting items.

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 1, scored for eight 'cellos, combines Bach and Brazil with, to our ears at least, no strain on anyone concerned. If any reader should question the value of eight 'cellos in a composition, we would like to say that tonal color and variety are very much in evidence throughout this absorbing work. There are three movements, marked *Introduction*, *Preludio*, and *Fugue*, respectively.

The remaining compositions on this disc, *Chôros No. 4* and *Chôros No. 7*, require an ear a little more seasoned to modern music than is necessary for the enjoyment of the first item above. *Chôros No. 4* is scored for three horns and a trombone; *Chôros No. 7* calls for flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone, bassoon, violin, violoncello and gong. There is such an unique blending of the old and the new in these compositions that it is not possible to dislike them if one has the opportunity to study them. H.

Fauré: Quintet No. 2 in C minor for Piano and Strings, Op. 115. Ray Lev (piano) and the Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1093) \$5.95.

The present work will probably be new to many music lovers in this country. We don't recall having heard it before—we have not been able to trace a previous recording of it. It dates from 1921 when Fauré was 76 years old and is one of the last works from that great French composer and teacher's pen. Despite the composer's age it is not the music of an old man—it is virile and seemingly has the freshness of youth. It is attractive, and when one has heard it for the first time, there is the urge to listen to it again. Repeated hearings bring out the rich beauty that lies below its surface. The Pascal String Quartet, that fine chamber music group who made such a successful tour of the United States in the 1949-50 season, is one of the leading string quartets of Western Europe. They specialize in music of French composers and with the collaboration of the distinguished American pianist, Ray Lev, have certainly given a definitive performance of this fine Fauré work.

Hindemith: String Quartet No. 4. Guilet String Quartet. 1-10" disc (*CH-CHS-1086) \$4.67.

Those interested in modern music will be pleased to know that this Concert Hall recording is now available to the general public. It was issued several years ago in Concert Hall's Limited Edition series. It received such fine critical notices that it was decided to issue as an LP disc and list it in the general catalog.

Hindemith's *String Quartet No. 4* dates from 1924 several years before the composer issued his Manifesto for *Gebrauchsmusik*, which stated that music must be addressed to a larger audience and must be easy to listen to and easier to perform. The work under consideration might be called "music for the musician" and is therefore an item of limited appeal. If you are not familiar with it, we suggest that you hear it before you add it to your record library.

The performance of the Guilet String Quartet is superb and the recording has been faithfully accomplished.

Debussy: Sonata No. 3 in G minor. Three sides, and **Debussy: La Plus que Lente—Valse.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emmanuel Bay (piano). 2-12" discs in Album (V-DM-1515) \$3.66. 2-7" discs in box (ϕV-WDM-1515) \$2.83.

Debussy contributed something new to the field of chamber music. Although his works in this genre were few, his ability to give shimmering beauty and great depth to small combinations of instruments paved the way for later departures from the rigid conventions of this type of music. The *Sonata No. 3*, here played with full awareness of its charm and delicacy by Heifetz and Bay, is not a work for violin with piano accompaniment: both instruments share honors all the way. *La Plus que Lente*, a pleasant, impressionistic waltz, completes the album as its fourth side.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 2 in G, Op. 18, No. 2. One side, and **Beethoven: Quartet No. 3 in D, Op. 18, No. 3.** The Kroll Quartet. 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-78) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 12 in E-flat, Op. 127. The Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1209) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 13 in B-flat, Op. 130. The Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1210) \$5.95.

It will not be long now until one may secure all of the Beethoven Quartets on LP records. This month, three that have not been previously available in this form are added to the list. We found the performances highly satisfactory and the reproduction of all of them excellent.

CHORAL



Stainer: The Crucifixion. John van der Gucht (tenor); Denis Noble (baritone); Frederick Woodhouse (organ) with the Whitehall Choir directed by Clifton Helliwell. 2-12" discs in folder (*CH-CHS-1110) \$11.90.

Here is a long awaited recording, and one that will warm many hearts. It is an altogether admirable performance. Those who will be interested in acquiring Stainer's *Crucifixion* will be pleased with the general characteristics of this version. It is not the type of performance we find in recordings of Haydn Masses by Viennese performers, or of Bach's Passions by foreign groups or by a group such as Robert Shaw's Choral. This rendition is exactly as you would hear it done in one of our own churches equipped with a fine choir—a boy choir by the way. We do not know anything about the Whitehall Choir, and Concert Hall is either secretive or stingy with the information, for they do not indicate who they are, where they are located, or where the recording was made. It was obviously made in a church, for the resonance is there, and the organ is a church instrument rather than a concert one. Whatever the details may be, this is a fine boy choir, recorded in a church with a good organ. After all, Stainer was a distinguished English composer, once organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, and no doubt wrote this for a boy choir. The vocal line is perfect for boys' voices, and this group does well with it.

The interpretation is exceptional in that the director is not fussy, not mannered, and does not rush the music. It is always thoughtful, with wonderful phrasing, good dynamics, and fine diction. Above all, the performance is convincing and moving. We must bear in mind that *The Crucifixion* is subtitled "A Meditation on the Sacred Passion of the Holy Redeemer," and is full of much tender and beautiful music, an entirely different conception from other settings of the *Crucifixion* which paint a more dramatic picture.

We would put in a special word, too, for the reproduction, which we consider ideal. It is a perfect

compromise in that the chorus is recorded with perspective and hall resonance, while the soloists are recorded close to the microphone for clarity and power. And the organ accompaniment, magnificently played and most imaginatively registrated, is always there whether soft or full, but never covers the voices—no easy trick of recording when the organ is playing quite full against a choir. If you like this music, you will certainly like this recording. S.

Pre-Baroque Sacred Music. (Sung in Latin). Harvard University Choir and Radcliffe Choral Society directed by William F. Russell. 1-10" disc (*FESTIVAL-FLP-70-202) \$4.00.

It is amazing to stop and consider the amount and variety of music captured on records. Music that never had a wide hearing, composers that were only names to many—both these are now available to everyone. The result of all this opportunity will not, in all probability, become apparent for many years. It is fascinating, however, to speculate on all the music making and listening that is going on—is it indiscriminate? Is it or will it be used to good purpose? The answer rests with the phonophile.

The foregoing remarks were prompted, specifically, by the record at hand, *Pre-Baroque Sacred Music* as sung by the Radcliffe Choral Society and the Harvard University Choir. Here is virtually unknown music by Dufay, Palestrina, Byrd, Lassus, Josquin des Pres and Praetorius. Two settings of the Magnificat, one by Dufay and the other by Palestrina, highlight the set and offer an excellent opportunity of comparing the methods and musical ideas of two giants of the Renaissance. There are also motets by Lassus and Palestrina, a round by Praetorius, a canon of Byrd's and an extraordinarily moving and beautiful setting of the 9th century Latin Hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* by Josquin des Pres. The Harvard University Choir and the Radcliffe Choral Society under the direction of William F. Russell sing with rare style and polish and, in addition, bring to each work the requisite expressiveness and feeling.

The record is a veritable feast for lovers of this early music and, equally important, it is just about the finest introduction to this music imaginable. The technical excellence of the recording adds the finishing touch to an already exceptional disc. Hear it, by all means! W.

Palestrina: Missa Papae Marcelli. (Sung in Latin).

Roger Wagner Chorale directed by Roger Wagner. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8126) \$4.98.

Hard on the heels of the Vox recording of Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli* comes this one, by the Roger Wagner Chorale, released by Capitol in a fine domestic recording.

Comparison is inevitable. The distinguishing feature (for good or ill) of the Vox performance (TNR May '51) was a rich, sensuous quality—a quality not present in this recording. There are good arguments both ways. Perhaps the ascetic quality in the Wagner Chorale is more suitable, more in keep-

ing with the spirit of the music—one strongly suspects that it is, but the almost lush quality of sound on the Vox disc falls more easily on modern ears. The soloists in the Vox set have better voices, but those in the present recording are more than adequate.

In listening to this music, it helps if one can remember that the musical "line" is as much vertical as horizontal, quite different from the harmonic construction of 18th, 19th and 20th century music. An effort is required to listen in this fashion, but it can be rewarding.

The Roger Wagner Chorale is an organization founded in 1946 and sponsored by the city of Los Angeles (!). It consists of about seventy members all selected very carefully by written and oral examination. Roger Wagner, its founder and conductor, is French born and is a member of the faculty of UCLA.

Two fine versions of this musical landmark are now available and before making a selection the prospective purchaser is urged to hear both and make a careful comparison. If this is not possible, then those with purist tendencies are advised to obtain the Capitol disc while those who revel in sound will be delighted with the Vox recording. W.

Bach: Cantata No. 65 ("Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 106** ("Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit"). The Roger Wagner Chorale, soloists and Chamber Orchestra conducted by Roger Wagner. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-104) \$5.95.

Two Bach *Cantatas* not previously recorded are presented in stunning performances this month by Allegro. *Cantata No. 65* ("Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen") celebrates the adoration of the Christ Child by the Magi. *Cantata No. 106* ("Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit") is a funeral Cantata, a magnificent blending of Old and New Testament thoughts on death.

The Roger Wagner Chorale sings the music with understanding and great beauty of tone. They have been able to combine accurate singing with more than a modicum of expression, making for a performance that has spirit as well as beauty. This is especially notable in the opening chorus of *Cantata No. 106* and is also apparent in the chorale *Die Kön'ge aus Saba* from *Cantata No. 65*.

The soloists, Katherine Hilgenberger (contralto), Robert Sands (tenor) and Ralph Isbell (bass) are excellent. Special praise must be reserved for Mr. Isbell, whose rich and sonorous bass is a delight. A highly competent instrumental ensemble consisting of strings, flutes, *cor anglais*, horns, cembalo and organ provide accompaniments that add much to the listener's enjoyment.

This record is easily one of the outstanding LP discs on several counts: first, it is of paramount musical interest to everyone; second, the performance, under Roger Wagner's capable direction is a model for this type of music; and finally, the recording is superb, the peer of the finest on LP. W.

Beethoven: Fantasia in C minor for Piano, Orchestra and Chorus, Op. 80. Friedrich Wuehrer (piano) with the Akademie Kammerchor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. One side, and **Schubert: Gesang der Geister über den Wassern, Op. 167.** Chorus of the Vienna State Opera with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6480) \$5.95.

Two fine, one might even say great, works never heretofore recorded make their appearance on an LP disc this month.

The *Fantasia in C Minor* (Op. 80) is a middle-period work of Beethoven, dating from 1808. It is full of fire, ingenious ideas, and is, in fact, a study for the great *Choral Symphony*. There is more than a passing similarity, there is an organic resemblance between the *Choral Fantasy* and the incomparable *Symphony No. 9 in D Minor*. The performance, under the able direction of Clemens Krauss is an excellent one. Frederick Wuehrer is an exceptionally capable pianist; the Vienna Symphony Orchestra and the Akademie Kammerchor need no introduction—they are past masters of this sort of music.

The Schubert song (?) *Gesang der Geister über den Wassern* (Song of the Spirits over the Waters) is based on a highly romantic poem of Goethe's that is concerned with the soul of man and its resemblance to water. Schubert made three different settings of these words; first for male chorus *a cappella*, then a version for male chorus with piano, and finally, in 1821, a setting for four tenors and four basses with an instrumental accompaniment consisting of two violas, two celli and one double bass. The present recording is a blown-up arrangement of the latter setting and does obvious violence to Schubert's intentions. It seems incredible that a musician of Krauss' standing and intelligence should do such a thing—but here it is. Even with the vulgarization, however, the work is one of great beauty and is, beyond a doubt, one of Schubert's finest compositions.

The recording in both selections is first-rate, and the German text with English translation is supplied in both instances. It might be noted, in the case of the Goethe poem, that there is a typographical error in translating *Schicksal* as "soul" instead of "fate" in the penultimate line.

It is a pity that more artistic conscience was not shown in recording the Schubert work. Perhaps the Haydn Society, for example, could be persuaded to record the work as written; then all the mystery and intensity Schubert poured into the music would be realized. W.

Hindemith: Apparebit Repentina Dies. Choir of the Vienna Singakademie with members of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. One side, and **Hindemith: Philharmonic Concerto** (Variations for Orchestra). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Hindemith. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8134) \$4.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

Mozart: (4) Sacred Arias. (Sung in Latin). One side, and **Mozart: Die Zauberflöte, K. 620—O zitt're nicht, Mein lieber Sohn! (Act I); Der Hölle Rache (Act II).** (Sung in German). Colette Lorand (soprano) with the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. 1-10" disc (*ME-MG-15026) \$3.85.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under OPERA.

OPERA

Berlioz: La Damnation de Faust, Op. 24 (complete). (Sung in French). Mona Laurena (mezzo-soprano); Georges Jouatte (tenor); Paul Cabanel (baritone); André Pactat (basso); with the Emile Passani Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Jean Fournet. 3-12" discs in folder (*C-SL-110) \$16.35.

La Damnation de Faust is described by Berlioz as "A Dramatic Legend in Four Acts." It may be (and has been) performed as an opera, as a cantata, or as an *opéra de concert*. Space will not permit an extended discussion of this, undoubtedly one of the most unique, most beautiful (a collection of the loveliest tunes in existence is what Sir Thomas Beecham called it) and haunting musical works of all time. Those interested are referred to Jacques Barzun's monumental work on Berlioz or to W. J. Turner's equally fine but more modest book. Better still, you are referred to these three LP discs containing virtually all the music. There are two small cuts in the arias, and all the recitatives are omitted.

In the title role is Georges Jouatte, a French tenor of uncommon beauty of voice. He has a finer quality than Thill, but not quite the bigness of Anseau. His singing of the music of Faust is productive of many a thrill, especially in the upper register, which at times is sensational. Absolute freedom from mannerisms and perfect diction are the hall marks of his performance. Paul Cabanel is a superb Mephistopheles. His competition is rougher (Plançon and Journet, to mention but two predecessors) but he turns in a job that is vocally brilliant, dramatically effective and artistically sincere. Mlle. Mona Laurena, as Marguerite, completes a trio of what may be truthfully considered the finest voices in France. She has a warm mezzo, youthful and capable of wide expression. André Pactat sings the relatively minor role of Brander in sound fashion although he sounds a bit "buttoned up," as though he were singing through his teeth. Considering the fact that he is supposed to be slightly tipsy, his performance is not without effect. Jean Fournet, the conductor, does very well in eliciting the many beauties of this unparalleled score. His tempi are reasonable and his direction does much to weld the ensemble into an harmonious whole.

The recording, made from French 78 rpm masters, is adequate but not high quality; it is not nearly so

good as the same company's *Carmen*. Most serious are the occasional deviations from pitch due to imperfectly centered masters, the sort usually identified as "swingers." Despite its inadequacies, however, it is not hard to listen to, and the beauty of the music does much to distract one from the technical limitations of the recording.

La Damnation de Faust, like so much of Berlioz' music, has never enjoyed great popularity in this country. Perhaps it is just as well, for music as fine and sensitive as this cannot have wide appeal. Turner summed it up perfectly when he wrote, "It is true of Berlioz, as of Mozart, that to listen to his music needs a rather strict mental training; you can not lie under it in a half-comatose state, letting it flow over you like bath water, as you can with Wagner and many other composers." To which one can only add a fervent Amen!

W.

Foss: The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County. (Sung in English). The After Dinner Opera Company. 1-12" disc (*LYRICHORD-LL-11) \$5.95.

We congratulate Lyrichord Records for their courage in releasing *The Jumping Frog*, considering the small public demand for such an item. We cannot doubt that a great deal of work went into the production of this LP disc; however, we cannot say we enjoyed the result. The first side seems confused, chiefly because the piano (the only accompaniment) dominates the singers and thereby makes comprehension difficult. A fairly detailed resume of the plot is included, but there is no libretto—a *must* in an item like this since, in its attempt at realism, there is much concerted singing (or yelling) and few words are distinguishable.

We do not wish to judge the composer, Lukas Foss (a young man of considerable talent), nor the After Dinner Opera Company by this effort to portray musically one of the least worthy but most overrated of the great Mark Twain's works. It is quite possible that to see as well as hear *The Jumping Frog* might add to our comprehension and enjoyment. For now, all we can say is that as a "heard" performance it has a decidedly limited appeal.

Verdi: Nabucodonosor ("Nabucco") (complete). (Sung in Italian). Gabriella Gatti, Caterina Mancini, Beatrice Preziosa (sopranos) Mario Binci, Licio Francardi (tenors); Paolo Silveri (baritone); Antonio Cassinelli, Albino Gaggi (bassos); with EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Fernando Previtali. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1216) \$17.85.

Nabucodonosor, always called *Nabucco* for short, was Verdi's third opera and his first great success. It is, if any opera in Italy can be so called, a truly national opera. Written at a time when Italy was under Austrian domination, the story of the captive Israelites inflamed the popular fancy, and the justly famous chorus *Va pensiero sull' ali dorate* took on

the character of a national air. That *Nabucco* is always considered national opera is also evident in the fact that it was chosen to open the rebuilt La Scala (damaged by bombs in World War II) and was also performed on 16 January 1951 as part of the ceremonies attendant to the inauguration of the Verdi Year of Radio Italiana. It was this performance that is here recorded.

A high-voltage cast is presented on these records. In the title role is Paolo Silveri and he is very effective dramatically and, in addition, is resplendent vocally. Catarina Mancini as Abigail is a real find—a glorious-voiced dramatic soprano. Hers is a great voice and that more will be heard from her is a foregone conclusion. The tenor role of Ismaele is in the capable hands of Mario Binci who will be remembered as a member of the New York City Opera Co. He is quite the best tenor Cetra has recorded, and the only complaint one can make is that his role is too small. The same complaint can be registered about Gabriella Gatti as Fenena, daughter of Nabucco. This golden-voiced lyric soprano is familiar to record collectors and she does a superb job with an all-too-short part. Antonio Cassinelli has the longest and most taxing role as Zaccaria, High Priest of the Temple. He has a magnificent bass which he uses well and to fine effect. Especially telling are his high notes, notably in the finale to the third act.

Musically the opera is a treat from beginning to end. There are, to be sure, some short passages that sound a bit naïve to our modern ears, but they are few and far between. The fire and passion of the score is amazing—the twenty-nine year old Verdi was a veritable volcano. Fernando Previtali, the soloists, chorus and orchestra realize all this emotion and excitement in realistic fashion, never losing sight of the fact that they are musicians first, then actors. The fine balance between opera and theatre is maintained throughout.

The recording is the best-balanced job Cetra has given us—thoroughly listenable, and good mechanically as well as acoustically. The set is unreservedly recommended—it is a phonographic experience second to none. Cetra has hit a home run with the bases loaded.

W.

Wagner: Scenes from "Parsifal." (Sung in German). Gunther Treptow (tenor) with the Chorus of the 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-287) \$4.95.
Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch.

Wagner: Siegfried—Waldweben (Act II). (Sung in German). Franz Lechleitner (tenor) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. One side, and **Wagner: Rienzi—Overture.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-290) \$4.95.

From *Parsifal* London Records has recorded the

Prelude, the Chorus and Scene of the Flower Maidens and an orchestral version of the *Transformation Scene*. Gunther Treptow sings the music of the young knight's temptation in the gardens of the sorcerer, Klingsor. Herr Treptow will be remembered for his excellent work in the recorded version of Act II of *Die Meistersinger* (LLP 284/5). One would assume from his performance on this disc that he would be an equally fine Parsifal. His voice is youthful, clear and expressive. His diction leaves nothing to be desired and he sings with an air of authority that is as convincing as it is musicianly. The Vienna State Opera Chorus supplies the Flower Maidens who also sing with conviction. The *Transformation Scene* occupies the balance of the side. This and the *Prelude* are purely orchestral and something of a disappointment. Herr Knappertsbusch's tempi are lackadaisical and, while his orchestra is one of the world's finest, it seems dispirited.

The *Overture to "Rienzi"* (Wagner in his Meyerbeer phase) is something else. Knappertsbusch wakes up here and the performance is a rousing one. It is "circus" music, to be sure, but it is played straight (for a really souped-up version hear *C-ML-2153) and the clarity and sincerity of the performance do much to obviate some of the essential vulgarity of the music. The reverse of the disc is occupied with the same orchestra and conductor assisting Franz Lechleitner in a performance of the *Waldweben*, beginning with the words *Das der mein Vater nicht ist*. The performance is a good one. Herr Lechleitner possesses an excellent tenor with none of the throatiness so often the bane of the Teutonic tenor. He has a fine upper register, thrilling and clear, and, what is equally important, a genuine feeling for the music.

The recording in the *Parsifal* music is poor for London—would be good to fair for most other companies. The surfaces on the review copy were noisy in the extreme. *Rienzi* and *Siegfried* have much better recording, real *ffrr*. W.

Stravinsky: Mavra. (Sung in English). Soloists with the New York Wind Ensemble and Augmented Orchestra conducted by Robert Craft. 1-12" disc (*DIAL-LP-12) \$5.95.

Stravinsky: Renard. (Sung in English). Soloists with Michael Zittai (Cymbalum) and orchestra conducted by Robert Craft. One side, and **Stravinsky: Suite No. 1 for Orchestra**, and **Stravinsky: Song of the Volga Boatman**. Orchestra conducted by Robert Craft. And **Stravinsky: Elegy for Viola**. Bernard Milofsky (viola). And **Stravinsky: Berceuse du Chat**. (Sung in French). Arline Carmin (contralto) with clarinet accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*DIAL-LP-10) \$5.95.

To those of our readers who do not shudder at the name of Stravinsky, we address ourselves first. Dial has done an invaluable service in bringing these little-known works to the public. Both *Renard* and *Mavra* display a side of Stravinsky not generally evident from his other works. The satire, both in music and words,

contained in these chamber operas is highly diverting and constitutes a romp, once one is familiar with what is going on.

Mavra, which pokes light-hearted fun at the traditional Italian *opera buffa*, is sung in lucid English which makes the accompanying full text virtually unnecessary. *Renard*, a ballet-opera, is much more of a farce and, consequently, more difficult to follow on first hearing—at least, without reference to the notes. The reverse side of the *Renard* disc contains a miscellany that amounts to a comprehensive *petit concert* of Stravinsky works. We would recommend this as a "first try" for those who are still a bit timid about one of our greatest contemporary composers. Seasoned Stravinskyites will take both discs in their stride.

Lotte Lehmann Sings (Vol. I). (Sung in German). Lotte Lehmann (soprano) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9523) \$5.85.

A Vienna State Opera Concert. (Sung in German and Italian). Ljuba Welitch (soprano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-69) \$5.95.

Mozart-Strauss Arias. (Sung in Italian and German). Ilse Hollweg (soprano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-250) \$4.95.

These three LP discs offer an interesting example of various singing styles. The first (*D-DL-9523) presents a series of recordings of the great Lotte Lehmann, made sometime in the early Thirties. The music ranges from *Ach, ich fuhl's und Deh, vieni non tardar*, from "Zauberflöte" and "Figaro" respectively, through the big aria from "Fidelio," an aria from d'Albert's half-forgotten "Die Toten Augen," *Butterfly's Entrance* to "Lohengrin" and "Tannhauser" the latter two being represented by two items each. Mme. Lehmann was at the height of her powers when the original recordings were made, and they show the many facets of her creative genius. Vocally she seems somewhat mature for Pamina and Susanna; but as Leonora, Elsa and Elisabeth it is difficult to imagine more convincing characterizations. The recordings show their age but have been carefully transferred to the LP record so that the total effect is reasonably good.

Ljuba Welitch's record for London is stunning. The beautiful Bulgarian soprano has never sounded better as she sings the first side which is devoted to music from Central European Operettas: *Zigeunerliebe*, *Der Zarewitsch* and *Die lustige Witwe* by Lehar and *Die Dubarry* by Millöcker. They are trifles, but so charmingly done that they seem almost great music. Real greatness becomes apparent on the other side. There are two arias from Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame*—two arias that by themselves would justify the price of the record. But there is also one of the finest recorded performances in many years of the big soprano arias from "Ballo in Maschera"—*Ma dall'arido stello divulas* and *Morró, ma prima in grazie*. To this must be added Rudolf Moralt's sensitive direction and

London's *ffrr* recording.

London also introduces a soprano that will be new to American audiences, Ilse Hollweg. Miss Hollweg has shown discriminating taste in selecting the material for her first disc, for it is new and unhackneyed. First there is the phenomenally difficult aria of Zerbinetta from Strauss' "Ariadne auf Naxos." The formidable music is negotiated by this brilliant young coloratura in flawless style and the high "F's" are brilliantly produced. Two previously unrecorded concert numbers of Mozart's, the scena and aria *Mia speranza adorata* . . . *Ah, non sai* (K. 416) and the aria *No, no, che non sei capace* (K. 419) are to be counted among the finest of the composer's music and, since they were originally written for Aloysia Weber, it becomes apparent at once that they are *bravura* arias. Miss Hollweg demonstrates her amazing virtuosity and musicianship in this magnificent music, leaving one almost breathless as she carries each to its successful conclusion. Josef Krips and the London Symphony Orchestra supply appropriate and finely-wrought accompaniments. The review copy had an annoying recorded rumble that might be eliminated in future pressings. Otherwise the recording is good. W.

Nicolai: Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor ("The Merry Wives of Windsor") (complete). (Sung in German). Ingeborg Schmitt-Stein, Irma Kästner (sopranos); Erna Westenberger (mezzo-soprano); Aloys Kühnert, Paul Reinecke (tenors); Theodor Horand (baritone); Kurt Böhme, Helmut Eyle, Wolfgang Markgraf (bassos); with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Mitteldeutsche Rundfunk (Leipzig) conducted by Rolf Kleinert. 2-12" discs in album (*OCEANIC-OCLP-303) \$12.55.

Otto Nicolai's *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor* is known in this country virtually only by its dashing and tuneful overture. The opera itself, although in the standard repertory of all Central European lyric theatres, achieved the grand total of one performance at the Metropolitan. Obviously, this is one of those works that does not travel well and, for those who like to investigate other nations' musical tastes, the recording at hand offers an excellent opportunity.

An all German cast, well trained, gives a good account of the music, although they are not all of high calibre. The weakest member is, unfortunately, the leading lady, Frau Fluth (Mrs. Ford) in the person of Ingeborg Schmitt-Stein. Mme. Schmitt-Stein's voice has seen better days. Her upper register is badly worn and is further afflicted with a heavy vibrato that is decidedly unpleasant. This spoils her big aria *Nun eilt herbei* and does not add anything to the ensembles. On the other hand, the Falstaff of Kurt Böhme is an outstanding job, equally as good as, or perhaps even better than his Baron Ochs. His large voice, sounding a bit coarse at times, is ideally suited to the role. His singing of the *Drinking Song* at the beginning of Act 2 is wonderful—especially fine are the low notes that sound like musical growls.

The Fenton of Aloys Kühnert is amiable and well sung. Irma Kastner, as Anne, has some good moments, but also suffers from more than average vibrato. The others in the long cast are good, especially Theodor Horand as Herr Fluth.

Rolf Kleinert and the Chorus and Orchestra of the Mitteldeutsche Rundfunk play well, but some of the *tempi* are hurried to the point where they seem almost frantic. Oceanic's recording has all the advantages and disadvantages of tape. The highs are clear however, and the transfer to LP is an excellent job. A complete German-English libretto is included. Because of the serious vocal inadequacies of Mme. Schmitt-Stein it is recommended that the set be heard before purchasing. W.

Mozart: Die Zauberflöte, K. 620—O zitt're nicht, mein lieber Sohn! (Act I); Der Hölle Rache (Act II). (Sung in German). One side, and Mozart: (4) **Sacred Arias**. (Sung in Latin). Colette Lorand (soprano) with the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. 1-10" disc (*ME-MG-15026) \$3.85.

On this ten-inch LP record Mercury Records introduces a young Swiss soprano who undertakes, among other things, the formidable task of singing the two arias of *Astrafammante*, the Queen of the Night from Mozart's incomparable *Die Zauberflöte*. Colette Lorand, who is only 25 years old, sings these two arias with excellent sense of style and amazing accuracy of pitch. The high "F's" in the *Rache-Arie* come off very well indeed and her over-all performance is one that is musicianly and tasteful—and there is also the promise of finer things to come if she follows the path so well begun.

The *Four Sacred Arias* are less exacting technically but still require the fine sense of style so necessary in Mozart. Miss Lorand has this in abundance. The four arias, incidentally, are new to records. The first is *Dulcissimum Convivium* (from K. 243) a part of the Church litany peculiar to Salzburg—the Litany of the Altar Sacrament. Next is the recitative and aria *Ergo Interest (Quaere Superna)* (from K. 143) from an early Motet. This is followed by the exquisite *Panis Vivus* (from K. 235) a setting of the Litany of the Vesper Sacrament and finally a *Laudate Dominum* (from K. 321) which is a musical setting of the familiar 117th Psalm. They are all very welcome additions to the Mozart repertory, especially so when sung by a fresh, well trained voice as they are on this record. W.

VOCAL



Mozart: Vocal Trios. (Sung in Italian and German). Katharine Hansel (soprano); Joseph Collins, John Yard (baritones); accompanied by William Reese (piano). 1-12" disc (*DEN-DR-1) \$5.95.

Mozart's *Gesellige Gesänge* (Convivial Songs) will undoubtedly be new to most music lovers. They were, as the name might imply, written for parties, parties

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 Ⓢ indicates 45 rpm.

usually held at the home of Freiherr von Jacquin, whose son, Gottfried, was a friend of the Mozarts. The accompaniments, at the *soirées*, were usually supplied by clarinets and basset horns, but for this recording an arrangement by the distinguished Mozart scholar, Bernhard Paumgartner, for piano is used (or as the Germans so neatly put it, *klavierbegleitet!*). It is suggested that such arrangements do no great violence to the spirit of the music, it being more than likely that Mozart heard the songs and participated in their performance using whatever instruments were at hand.

Thus we have Twelve Trios for voice, all new to records. There are nine of the *Gesellige Gesänge* and, for contrast, three selections from rarely performed Mozart operas—*Vengo aspetate* from "La Clemenza di Tito;" *O selige Wonne* from "Zaide;" and the trio *Madina amabile* written for Bianchi's forgotten opera "La Vilanella Rapita." These three operatic excerpts are delightful, being typically Mozartean in their sprightliness; and further, they throw light on portions of his work that has remained too long in the dark. As for the songs, the "vocal chamber music," they, too, are sheer magic. Tossed off as trifles (for Mozart, that is) and written for a few friends, they have musical merit to an astonishing degree. The performances are natural and sensitive, the singers all having sympathetic voices. They also sing with understanding and obvious fondness for their material. The recording is good, but the review copy had more surface noise than one expects from present day LP records. W

Songs of Debussy. Suzanne Danco (soprano) accompanied by Guido Agosti (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-336) \$4.95.

Lieder of Brahms and Hugo Wolf. Suzanne Danco (soprano) accompanied by Guido Agosti (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-335) \$4.95.

Suzanne Danco makes an impressive *lieder* debut on these two LP discs. Songs by Brahms, Wolf and Debussy exhibit her amazing versatility and notable sense of style. The works of these three essentially romantic composers are strikingly dissimilar, yet Mme. Danco projects them with the utmost clarity and feeling.

There are five Brahms *lieder*, including the ever popular *Wiegenlied* and such other favorites as *Die Mainacht*, *Ständchen*, *Wir wandelten* and *Mein Lieb* *is grün*. The Wolf songs include *Verborgenheit*, *Blumengruss*, *Gleich und Gleich*, *Frühling übers Jahr* and *Anakreons Grab*. The last four are settings of poems by Goethe. In all, the soloist's clear, expressive lyric soprano aids her highly communicative presentation, making the record an ideal introduction to German *lieder* for those who may have fought shy of this form of musical art. For devotees, the record is a prime example of exquisite singing and an almost perfect demonstration of the proper way to sing this evocative music.

The Debussy songs are equally well presented,

being in fact just about the best performances of these songs available. There is an intimacy about the whole affair that is very engaging. Miss Danco's voice seems to take on a warm velvety sheen that can only be ascribed to sheer inspiration. In the first group, *Ariettes Oubliées*, most of the songs are familiar, including such standbys as *Vert*, *Spleen*, *Il pleure dans mon coeur*. There are a few not so well known, however, and among the latter are *C'est l'extase langoureuse*, *L'ombre des arbres* and *Cheveaux de bois*. Two other groups, *Le promenoir des deux amants* and *Chansons de Bilitis* occupy the reverse side of the disc.

Miss Danco's accompanist, Guidi Agosti, rates special mention for beautifully conceived and expertly accomplished support. London has supplied English versions of the songs but no texts—and at \$4.95 per record a pamphlet, at least, giving text and translation should be included. It is sheer lack of imagination to omit this courtesy—or is it plain indifference? The recording is superb. W.

Rameau: Diane et Actéon. One side, and Rameau: *L'Impatience*. (Sung in French). Hugues Cuénod (tenor) with Robert Brink, William Waterhouse (violins); Alfred Zighera (viola da gamba); Daniel Pinkham (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3010) \$5.95.

Allegro issues this month two secular cantatas by the French master Rameau. The first, *Diane et Actéon* concerns itself with the story of the young hunter Actéon who pursues the goddess Diane and is subsequently turned into a stag and torn to pieces by his own hounds. The other, *L'Impatience*, is the tale of a young lover torn between happiness and grief.

Both cantatas, but especially the former are curiously undramatic by present day standards but nevertheless possess a charm that can not be denied. The air of remoteness, classic in its connotations, is characteristic of music of this period. This almost Olympian calm, once one gets accustomed to it, can be a source of strength and renewal for weary spirits. It is music of a vanished age, of a time that seems light-years away, rather than a mere 230 years chronologically.

M. Hugues Cuénod, who once recorded *L'Impatience* for Technichord before World War II, sings both items with his accustomed attention to detail and style. His voice is fresh and for music such as this, he properly makes no effort to sing with any degree of sensuous charm. The result is a performance that is authentic and sound.

The recording is perfect; the small instrumental ensemble consisting of two violins, viola da gamba and harpsichord has been captured so realistically that the illusion is created of actual presence. W.

Song Recital. Gerard Souzay (baritone) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-245) \$5.95.

This LP disc is reputed to contain a song recital by the French baritone, Gerard Souzay. However, we

doubt that M. Souzay would ever give a recital consisting of seven numbers by Fauré and six by Schubert. It is true that there is considerable variety in the Schubert selections but there is a sameness in the Fauré songs he has selected that tends to make that side of this disc rather monotonous. While M. Souzay's voice is not one of great volume, it has a naturally dark quality that in certain selections is quite appealing. His renditions for the most part are sensitive indicating a deep appreciation of the text. His diction in both French and German is a model of clarity.

The Schubert songs are *Gesänge des Harfners; Fischerweise; Der Wanderer; Der Doppelgänger; Heidenröslein; and Der Erlkönig*. Fauré is represented by *Tristesse; Au bord de l'eau; Après un rêve; Claire de lune; Arpège; En sourdine; and L'Horizon chimérique*.

Friml: Rose Marie. Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) and Nelson Eddy (baritone) with the Howard Chandler Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Leon Arnaud. 4-10" discs in album (C-MM-1005) \$5.35. 4-7" discs in box (øC-A-1005) \$5.10. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2178) \$4.

Another veteran of the footlights makes its appearance this month. Dorothy Kirsten and Nelson Eddy are our protagonists this time around. Whatever modern audiences may think of operetta plots, they cannot deny the evident and immediate appeal of such songs as *Rose Marie, Indian Love Call* and *Totem Tom Tom*, and the five others included in this set.

Evans: My Life's Desire. One side, and **Lisbona: The Girls We Never Wed.** Robert Merrill (baritone) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Henri René. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3426) \$1.16.

Forsaking operatic arias for the moment, Robert Merrill offers *The Girls We Never Wed*—one of those get-together-around-the-fire-or-club-room ditties which are very useful when old grads congregate. The reverse side contains *My Life's Desire* a song that offers no competition at all for the first selection.

A Jan Peerce Serenade. Jan Peerce (tenor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 3-10" discs in album (V-DM-1514) \$4.50. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1514) \$3.99.

Wilkinson: Because of You. One side, and **Beck: What is a Boy?** Jan Peerce (tenor) with Hugo Winterhalter and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-3425) \$1.16. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3425) \$1.16.

Jan Peerce has turned his talents to a flock of songs with an universal appeal for his album entitled "*A Jan Peerce Serenade*." The songs are: *Song of Songs; Sylvia; Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life; When You and I Were Young, Maggie; Silver Threads Among the Gold; and Schubert's Serenade*. If you would like to have Mr. Peerce sing these favorites, you have but to secure the present album.

The single disc listed above contains, in addition to the popular ballad *Because of You*, a tear-jerker poem entitled *What is a Boy?* Mr. Peerce recites this poem with a musical background supplied by the orchestra in a most lachrymose manner—his performance should go big at a father and sons banquet. It is one of those things that may catch the popular fancy; if it does, this record will have a tremendous sale, and all of your friends who own phonographs will insist upon your hearing it when you come to call.



PIANO

Beethoven: Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 2, No. 2.** Kurt Appelbaum (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5075) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 31 in A-flat, Op. 110. One side, and **Schumann: Etudes Symphoniques, Op. 13.** Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4388) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 29 in B-flat, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier"). Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6750) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 28 in A, Op. 101. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 7 in D, Op. 10, No. 3.** Leonid Hambro (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-85) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 26 in E-flat, Op. 81a ("Les Adieux"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 17 in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2** ("The Tempest"). Guiomar Novães (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6270) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 21 in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 7 in D, Op. 10, No. 3.** Kurt Appelbaum (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5044) \$5.95.

This would seem to be "Beethoven Sonata" Month, if we refer to the imposing list above this paragraph. There are nine piano sonatas represented—No. 7 in D figures twice in our listing—and in addition we have Schumann's *Etudes Symphoniques* as partner with *Sonata No. 31*.

With space at a considerable premium in this publication, we cannot devote as much room to the consideration of the discs involved as we would wish. None of the performances is less than "good" and, in the main, we found Kurt Appelbaum's playing the most exciting. He plays robustly and appears in no way "mannered" as is sometimes the custom when playing Beethoven. Guiomar Novães gives her usual beautiful, thoughtful and expert performance. One of Beethoven's less dramatic sonatas is played with considerable attention to detail by Casadesus, who is also heard in the Schumann *Etudes* in which he has a decided edge on Brailowsky's earlier version. Horszowski does his best with what to us is the least pleasing of the sonatas. Bringing up the rear,

but not by intention, is Leonid Hambro, a pianist still in his twenties, who has, if our ears do not deceive us, a brilliant future.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"). First Piano Quartet. 1-12" disc (V-12-3276) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (ϕV-49-3276) \$1.16.

The ever-popular First Piano Quartet's releases are too few these days if we can judge by dealers clamoring for anything new by these artists. Here is something new, albeit not enough in quantity, in a tasteful eight-hand arrangement of Beethoven's best-known piano work. Performance and piano tone are excellent.

Grieffs: The White Peacock. One side, and **Lecuona: Malagueña.** Amparo Iturbi (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-3273) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (ϕV-49-3273) \$1.16.

In one of her rare solo appearances, Miss Iturbi presents *The White Peacock*—a work not often heard that has much charm and color, slightly reminiscent of Debussy—and the hardy perennial, *Malagueña*, which she imbues with enough interest to catch one's ear.

Piano Music of Debussy. George Copeland (piano). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-526) \$3.

Debussy: Suite Bergamasque. One side, and **Ravel: Gaspard de la Nuit.** Frank Glazer (piano). (1-12" disc (*POLYMUSIC-PRLP-1005) \$5.95.

At one time, George Copeland's name figured prominently in the catalogs. It is quite evident from this recent issue on MGM discs that his present obscurity must be self-imposed. His playing has never been better, and he has been provided with the best piano reproduction we have heard in some time. Mr. Copeland, a long-time friend of Debussy's, presents *Clair de lune*; *La cathédrale engloutie*; *Minstrels*; *Prélude (from "Pour le piano")*; *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*; and *Danse sacrée*. The last two numbers were transcribed, with the composer's blessing, by Mr. Copeland.

The second disc presents a problem. It, in its way, is as noteworthy a contribution to the interpretation of Debussy's work as Copeland's. Frank Glazer plays *Suite Bergamasque* in its entirety and, as an ideal companion, gives us Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit* for the reverse side. He does magnificently in both ventures and as far as we're concerned leaves us no other way out—it's Copeland vs. Glazer for a tied score.

Schubert: Sonata in C for Piano ("Unfinished"). Ray Lev (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1072) \$5.95.

Several years ago Concert Hall issued this recording in its Limited Edition series. It enjoyed wide critical acclaim, and so it is now being made available generally on the present LP disc.

When Schubert died, he left this Sonata unfinished and the distinguished Austrian composer, Ernest Křenek, assumed the responsibility of completing it. Mr. Křenek approached his task with great humility and is generally considered to have done a highly

satisfactory job. In his notes that accompany the present recording Mr. Křenek states that:

"The first two movements are fully worked out by Schubert himself. The fragments of the two concluding movements break up only after the main thematic ideas are clearly set forth. My task therefore was to apply to those ideas the methods of elaboration which I could learn from Schubert's completed compositions. My greatest satisfaction has been that leading students of Schubert's music were not able to detect the points at which my contribution began."

The distinguished American pianist, Ray Lev, has given a brilliant performance of this work, and Concert Hall has supplied very fine piano reproduction.

Rachmaninoff: (24) Preludes. Moura Lympany (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*L-LLP-328/9) \$11.90.

Everyone knows that Rachmaninoff composed a prelude—"The Prelude," which was the second of five pieces for piano dating from 1893—but not everyone knows that he wrote 23 more—many of them highly attractive. After "The Prelude" appeared, none appeared for ten years and then Opus 23 was published in 1903 consisting of ten more. The last group, Opus 32 consisting of 13, was published in 1910.

Some of the more popular of these little pieces have been recorded by several pianists but it remained for the celebrated English pianist, Moura Lympany, to record the whole twenty-four. In our opinion Miss Lympany has done a work of love and has done it in a highly satisfactory way—we have nothing but praise for this fine artist's interpretations on these LP discs. One would probably not want to hear all of them at one sitting but they are so spaced on these records that the listener may pick and choose the particular preludes he wishes to hear at any one time.

The best of London *ffrr* piano reproduction prevails.

ORGAN



Bach: Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor. One side, and **Bach: Pastorale in F.** Ernest White (organ). 1-10" disc (*ME-MG-15032) \$3.85.

Ernest White is one of this country's finest church musicians, and it is good to have a record with two important Bach works played by him. The instrument he uses is the organ of St. Mary the Virgin, New York City. It is one of the greatest instruments in the country—many think one of the finest in the world. Anyone will agree it is a magnificent organ with a sound that is thrilling in the best sense of the word. On this disc we have a chance to hear its full grandeur as well as many of its lovely solo voices and softer effects. It is well recorded, with plenty of resonance but no smear.

The *Passacaglia and Fugue* is given a sterling reading by Mr. White, who does not indulge in anything out of the ordinary. His performance is solid and

reasonably imaginative, and a model of clarity (the organ deserves equal credit for the clarity). The *Pastorale in F* stands in sharp contrast to the architectural grandeur of the *Passacaglia*. It is literally chamber music for the organ, a little suite in four movements. First comes an episode in 12/8 fully in keeping with the music's title. This is followed by a 4/4 piece in musette style for manuals only. A lovely 3/8 slow movement follows, the melodic content of which recalls irresistibly the famous *Adagio* from the organ "Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C." The final movement is a delightful running toccata for manuals in 6/8—a sort of miniature version of the gigantic organ *Toccata in F* written at about the same time. We are grateful for this beautiful performance of the *Pastorale in F*, a worthy addition to the Bach catalog of records. Organ lovers should not fail to hear this disc; it is a beauty!

S.

Organ Recital. Clarence Snyder (organ). 1-12" disc (*KEY-LP-15) \$4.85.

Key Records has issued a very fine organ record by an organist whose playing is as good as his choice of material. The material he has selected is comprised of shorter works, but just the sort of thing you find on recital programs. It is all good music, much of it appearing for the first time on discs. One side of the record contains these: *Fugue in C* (Buxtehude), a Brahms choral prelude, *Canon* (Schumann), and *Cantabile* (Franck). Turning to more modern fare, on the second side we have: *Landscape in the Mist* (Karg-Elert), *Intermezzo* (Dupré), *Sicilienne* (Durufle), and *In Babilone* (Purvis). Purvis is an American composer, formerly of Philadelphia, and his music not only stands up well beside the rest of the program, but is better than some of it.

We would suggest that Key Records do a better labeling job. First, complete titles for all music on the record, and secondly, the name and location of the building housing the organ used for the recording. Such omissions irk us, and we are liable to give a nasty review to anyone who is careless in such matters.

This time we will overlook the label's shortcomings, for Mr. Snyder deserves credit for his choice of material and for the performances of it which he offers. His playing is accurate, with good phrasing and deft registration. The organ he uses is of the romantic variety rather than the severe classical type, and the music on this disc for the most part sounds fine on this instrument. It is surprisingly well recorded. Many organ fans have dreamed of the day when someone would start issuing collections of organ music that contained nothing in particular and everything in general—more or less as you would hear it at an organ recital. Here's one for you, and it is a very good one.

S.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, AL—Allegro, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CN—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DG—Deutsche Gramophon, DI—Disc, GIOA—Grecian Inst. of America, HS—Haydn Society, HW—Hargall, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, T—Telefunken, V—Victor, VX—Vox, WEST—Westminster, and W—Woodwind.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ⓢ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 6

AUGUST, 1951

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

WHEN one thinks of learning a language by means of phonograph records, he generally thinks of the Linguaphone courses, which are made for learning just about any language the student might desire. The Linguaphone method of having the recorded voice read only in the language to be learned and referring the student to pictures in the text teaches one to think in the language, rather than merely to translate. This system has proved successful over many years.

When a new language learning series is inaugurated by another manufacturer, then, a comparison with Linguaphone is inevitable. Henry Holt and Co. (New York) has recently issued what we presume to be the first of a series: "Speaking and Writing Spanish." The set consists of 3-12" Long Playing (33 1/3 r.p.m.) records in an album, plus a textbook consisting of 165 pp. of lesson material and 56 pp. of vocabulary and drills; the price is \$26.05. This is the first language course on LP records which has come to our attention. Aside from cheapness of price, the Long Playing feature does not add (nor subtract) anything. We can see no particular advantage to having two lessons to a side over having a lesson split on two 78-r.p.m. sides.

"Speaking and Writing Spanish" has much to recommend it other than low price (Linguaphone's Spanish course sells for \$57.50). The grooves on our records were absolutely noiseless, thereby enhancing the diction of the speakers—of which there are several, as in the Linguaphone course, to give the student the experience of listening to many different voices. The vocabulary is small enough and practical enough to be mastered in its entirety, comprising approximately 1200 basal entries of highest frequency.

However, we feel that the Holt system of first

reading the sentence in English and then in Spanish will give the student a crutch from which he will find it difficult to break away; this, rather than teach *thinking* in the language, teaches the student to *translate*. Too, the instructors start right off in Lesson 1 speaking as fast as a native would, making it somewhat difficult for the uninitiated to follow the text. Linguaphone, on the other hand, starts off with the teacher speaking very slowly and distinctly, much as one would speak to a child; the lessons then speed up as the course progresses.

We should therefore say that if price is no consideration, the Linguaphone course would be preferable; however, the Holt is surely a greater bargain and we have the feeling that a great many students will find it more than acceptable at a considerable saving.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 1/3 r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Schumann: *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Op. 42. Lotte Lehmann with Bruno Walter (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2182) \$4. (TNR July '43).

Schumann: *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48. Lotte Lehmann with Bruno Walter (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2183) \$4. (TNR Feb. '42).

Liszt: *A Faust Symphony*. Villabella (tenor) with Alexis Vlasoff Choir and Paris Philharmonic Orchestra—Meyrowitz. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6920) \$5.95. (TNR May '36).

Weber: *Der Freischütz* (abridged). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of Berlin State Opera—Heger. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-112) \$11.70. (TNR Oct. '49).

ORCHESTRA

previous recording on 78? 
 Dvorák: *Symphony No. 2 in D minor*, Op. 70. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ernst Schrader. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7015) \$5.95.

Dvorák: *Suite in D*, Op. 39 ("Czech"). Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-10" disc (*CH-CHS-1069) \$4.67.

Dvorák: (6) *Legends*, Op. 59. One side, and Dvorák: *The Wood Dove*, Op. 110. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7010) \$5.95.

Although listed as No. 2, the D minor symphony is actually the seventh of the nine works in this form. Not until Dvorák had written six symphonies did he succeed in having one published (1880). The sixth in D is thus No. 1 and the seventh in D minor (recorded here) is No. 2. An earlier work in F (1875) was published in 1887 as No. 3, and the later G and E minor symphonies are thus Nos. 4 and 5.

All of this silly confusion could be eliminated if publishers would use the right number regardless of when a work is published. The idea we wish to convey is that Dvorák's *Second Symphony* is no mincing excursion into the field by a young man. Tovey unhesitatingly places this symphony along with the C major of Schubert and the four symphonies of Brahms as among the greatest and purest examples in this art form since Beethoven. The bucolic affability that pervades most of Dvorák's symphonies is replaced by an atmosphere of tragedy that sets it apart from the others. The mood is sustained throughout most of the work, which never once falls below the highest plane of tragic music.

Dvorák's *Second Symphony* is worthy of more performances than it receives on concert programs throughout our country. We have the feeling that the idea that it is only his second hurts its chances. Call it the sixth and it would probably be more popular. The performance it enjoys on this LP disc will not efface the old Talich-Czech Philharmonic version of bygone days, but it is a worthy effort. Ernst Schrader does not summon playing of the highest order from the Berlin Philharmonic, but he has enthusiasm which reaches notable heights on occasion, and his feeling for the music seems genuine. Reproduction is very good.

Swoboda and the Winterthur orchestra play the "Czech" *Suite* with fine sparkle, and it is music that can stand robust treatment. Consisting of *Praeludium* (Pastorale), *Polka*, *Menuett*, *Romanze*, and *Finale—Furiant*, this gay music of a folk-like nature is the type we associate with Dvorák and his Slavonic Dances. Anyone can enjoy this little suite. Good reproduction.

Six of the ten "*Legends*," Op. 59 and *The Wood Dove*, one of six symphonic poems, make their debut for most of us; and for this reviewer in particular, it is nothing about which to be excited. It is innocuous music, but not distinguished. The Radio Berlin orchestra is likewise not distinguished—a competent group, but not of the calibre of the major orchestras. This disc is recommended to ardent devotees of Dvorák only. Reproduction is good. S.

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor*, Op. 64. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 6-7" discs in box (øCA-1007) \$7.40. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4400) \$5.45.

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor*, Op. 64. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9519) \$5.85.

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor*, Op. 64. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sergiu Celibidache. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-168) \$5.95.

The heading above lists them in order of preference. Ormandy is clearly, easily, far and away the best of these—and also the best Tchaikovsky *Fifth* ever committed to records. We think it is the best of them all because it indulges in the fewest eccentricities and extravagances. Ormandy does not get capricious anywhere in this score. At the same time, he maintains a good level of intensity and excitement, and is aware of the traditional touches most conductors give this music. Aiding Ormandy immeasurably is his magnificent orchestra, whose playing in this work is as fine as you will ever hear from any orchestra. Their precision is phenomenal, and their tone, individually and in choirs, is ravishing every minute. The famous horn solo in the second movement is beautifully played. Columbia has supplied superb reproduction to complete this most successful disc.

The other two versions may appeal to some folks, but frankly we cannot dream up any reasons why. The Decca set is really good, as these *Fifths* go, but it pales beside the Ormandy set. The Berlin Philharmonic plays well, and Fricsay has a valid conception of the score. We had a continual feeling that Fricsay was pushing the music and taking it just a shade faster than he should (and in one or two instances than the orchestra thought he should), and since we don't like Tchaikovsky rushed, we didn't like Fricsay's interpretation, especially the last movement. The reproduction is good, but not too full and round—rather on the thin side.

In this enlightened age, and with the overly crowded record releases, there is no justification for the London *Fifth*. It is an example of how poor their reproduction can be when something goes wrong. They break the second movement to continue it on side two, and we detected a bad splice about one-third the way through the first movement (even Celibidache cannot be responsible for that). As for Celibidache, we took a violent dislike to him after seeing his pic-

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 ø indicates 45 rpm.

ture on the record jacket—keep it away from your children or they'll have nightmares—a masterpiece of bad taste! And upon hearing his dull, lifeless, stodgy idea of the music, and the mediocre playing of the London Philharmonic . . . well, why go on? Get the Ormandy disc and enjoy a bit of recorded perfection. S.

Handel: (6) Concerti for Orchestra, Op. 3. Three sides, and **Handel: Alexanderfest Concerto in C.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 2-12" discs in album (*BACH GUILD-BG-505/6) \$11.90.

The present album is of especial importance because it contains a wealth of Handel music that has never been recorded previously. The six *Concerti for Orchestra, Op. 3* is considered by many scholars as ranking with the famous twelve "Grand" *Concerti Grossi, Op. 6*, recordings of which have been available for many years. The *Alexanderfest Concerto*, considerably longer than any of the six in Opus 3, is music in the same vein, and finds an appropriate place in the present album on the last side of the second disc. It was probably written to be used as incidental music or as an overture to Handel's oratorio of the same name.

The performance of this delightful music has been most successfully accomplished by the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under the able direction of the brilliant young European conductor, Dr. Felix Prohaska. The reproduction throughout rates with the best.

Kodály: Dances from Galanta. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Victor de Sabata. One side, and **Kodály: Háy János Suite.** Bavarian State Opera Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9518) \$5.85.

This disc has formidable competition from Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra as far as the *Háy János Suite* is concerned. Ormandy's performance of this music has always been one of his specialties, and his recording with the Philadelphians outclasses Solti and the Bavarian Orchestra in every respect. Furthermore the Columbia reproduction is better than the Deutsche Grammophon. The *Intermezzo* (part five of the suite) is a marvelous czardas which Ormandy carries off capably; it is as flat as a pancake in Solti's hands. This is no case of Ormandy gilding the lily, for the music is in his blood, being composed by a compatriot. Also, the music is drawn from a comic opera and is a highly humorous and imaginative affair (which we outlined in *TNR* of August 1950). It can easily stand, indeed it benefits from, all the zip Ormandy gives it.

The coupling of the Ormandy disc is Ravel's *Rhapsodie Espagnole*, in a performance of exquisite coloring. The coupling of the present disc may be more logical, being by the composer of *Háy János*, but it is hardly more arresting music than Ravel's. The *Galanta Dances* are conceived as separate pieces, but played without pause and are integrated by recurrent

themes; there are five dances and a coda. The suite was composed for the eightieth anniversary of the Budapest Philharmonic. Sabata's performance is both mettlesome and meddlesome. It is one of clarity and strength which is inclined to overstress. This is rather folklike music and can stand a somewhat relaxed performance. Having been issued previously on 78 rpm, Sabata's performance has received some favorable critical comment, so ours may be a minority opinion. In any event, we'll agree it is better than the older Boston Pops version. So, if this coupling appeals to you, take the Decca disc; otherwise we advise the Columbia disc by Ormandy for his superb *Háy János* and excellent Ravel. S.

Haydn: Symphony No. 52 in C minor. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Anton Heiller. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 56 in C.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anton Heiller. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-1039) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 55 in E-flat ("The Schoolmaster"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 104 in D ("London").** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5066) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 97 in C. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 102 in B-flat.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5062) \$5.95.

This month we have recordings of six Haydn Symphonies—five of which have not been previously available on LP discs—the exception is the No. 104, which is presently to be had by the Bavarian Radio Orchestra under Dressel and the Boston Symphony conducted by Münch. There are now forty-eight Haydn Symphonies listed in the latest LP catalogs.

The versions that are offered this month are well up to the high standard set by both the Haydn Society and Westminster. Lack of space does not permit our considering them in detail but we can assure those who are making a collection of these symphonies that they will surely be well pleased with these new recordings.

Janáček: Taras Bulba (Orchestral Rhapsody). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One side, and **Janáček: Suite for String Orchestra.** Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5071) \$5.95.

Who was Janáček? He was first of all a man who composed music of beauty. Besides melodic beauty his music has freshness and vitality and some humor. Then history will tell you he was an important Bohemian composer at the turn of the century (1854-1928) and that he was born too late to be a successful exponent of the musical nationalism exemplified in the works of his older countrymen, Dvorák and Smetana, and too soon to be a part of the most advanced musical currents of the first quarter of the twentieth century. Mercury, Concert Hall, and now

Westminster are to be thanked for bringing five of his works to LP discs. The present disc is one that could appeal to anyone interested in so-called classical music, as distinguished from popular music. In other words, it is very listenable.

The *Suite for String Orchestra* is an early work, written at twenty-three, and is as pleasing and melodious, with its richly romantic harmonies, as anything you could imagine. It is written for strings, and in this performance and recording it is played with absolutely ravishing beauty. There may be evidences of Dvorák and Smetana in this work, and it is not startlingly original; but it is mighty pretty music. It is in six short movements, and there is not much else to say about it except that we loved it.

Taras Bulba is a product of Janáček's later years, written at sixty-four. It is an orchestral rhapsody based on the exploits of the hero of Gogol's tale of the fifteenth century tribe of Cossack warriors. Janáček has attempted to portray the three tragic crises in the life of Taras Bulba in the three movements of his rhapsody. While the story is known concerning these events, the rhapsody is intended as a tonal drama in three acts rather than a purely musical conception. It is good and colorful music, stirs the imagination, and makes an impression. Together these two compositions give a fine sampling of Janáček, and provide something new that is also pleasant and worthwhile. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-316) \$5.95.

When listening to this symphony there are times when one wonders whether Beethoven ever wrote more beautiful passages than these. There is such logic combined with charming melody, in phrases of perfect symmetry. The *Fourth* is a joyful work, an exuberant expression of the master between the composition of two works of graver nature. It provided him with an escape from disappointment over the failure of his opera *Fidelio*. Some folks detect a similarity of thematic ideas in the opening *Adagio* of the first movement with the *Fidelio* music. There is an atmosphere of mystery and suspense in this unusually long slow section, which finally breaks into the cheerful *Allegro* section. The slow second movement is one of Beethoven's best. The third movement is a scherzo, alternately boisterous and wistful, while the last movement is largely a joyous affair that brings this symphony to a brisk and satisfying conclusion.

If your library does not include the Beethoven *Fourth* we believe you are missing a most enjoyable symphony. Whether or not you should acquire the present set will be dictated by your own taste, for there are now three very good versions on LP. The present set is a rather typical continental type of performance, not too taut or hard driven, but more relaxed and genial. It is a reading that suits the music well. We would call it a good rendition and could recommend it highly except for the competitive ver-

sion by Beecham (*V-LM-1026), who happens to have used the same orchestra, London Philharmonic.

We have admired this reading since its release and feel it has a little more insight and a bit more finish to the playing. There is little to choose from in the reproduction of the two sets, London is somewhat fuller and thicker in sound. The third version is by Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra (*C-ML-4008) and is a very precise and crisp performance, not preferable to either of the above. S.

Mozart: (7) Early Overtures. The National Gallery Orchestra (Washington) conducted by Richard Bales. 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-3) \$5.95.

Lo Sposo Deluso, K. 430.

Apollo et Hyacinthus, K. 38.

La Finta Giardiniera, K. 196.

Il Rè Pastore, K. 208.

La Finta Semplice, K. 51.

Mitridate, Rè di Ponto, K. 87.

Lucio Lilla, K. 135.

Mozart's music seems to have no season. Many of the major composers have had lean representation, from time to time, in symphonic programs, but it is a rare week in the concert year when Mozart's name is absent from the list. It is unusual, however, to be presented with something new in the way of Mozart's music. We are grateful to WCFM for adding these little-known overtures to its catalog. Although no comment would be necessary to enhance our enjoyment of these musical tid-bits, WCFM has included interesting notes on the origin of each overture, together with a discussion of the musical forms used.

Richard Bales and the National Gallery Orchestra maintain their fine musicianship in this brilliant recording of as delightful a series of short works as it has been our pleasure to hear in some time.

"Meet the Composer." Igor Stravinsky conducting and playing his own works with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York, the Woody Herman Orchestra, and Joseph Szigeti (violin). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4398) \$5.45.

Feu d'artifice ("Fireworks").

Ode.

Russian Maiden's Song.

Ebony Concerto.

(4) *Norwegian Moods*.

Circus Polka.

After the success of the *Great Masters of the Keyboard* series issued on LP by Columbia Records, a logical follow-up to composers of the past would seem to be composers of today playing and conducting their own works and those of others. With *Meet the Composer*, a new series with just this in mind, Columbia Records presents in the initial release Igor Stravinsky in the rôle of conductor and performer. We found the selections to be a good cross-section

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

of the shorter works of one of the greatest living composer-musicians of our time.

Stravinsky has always been for us the Picasso of music in that he is a man of many techniques and never hesitates to experiment with new or old forms. The earliest piece in this collection is *Fireworks*, written in 1908, and the latest is *Ebony Concerto*, written expressly for Woody Herman in 1945. We think this presentation gives the *Meet the Composer* series a good send-off and hope to hear more of it.

Martin: The Grandma Moses Suite. Orchestra conducted by Daniel Saidenberg. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2185) \$4.

Here is a charming portrait in music of one of the most famous oldsters of the day. Originally written for a film about Grandma Moses and her paintings, it has been developed and orchestrated by Alec Wilder from Hugh Martin's score. There are ten sections: *Cambridge Valley*; *Whistle Stop*; *Anna Mary*; *Sugaring Off*; *Sewing*; *Children's Children's Children*; *Winter in Hoosick Falls*; *Pioneer Stock*; *Lullaby*; and *Christmas*. The general character of the music, as one might surmise from the titles, is peaceful and folk-like with a spirited section here and there for contrast. The work will appeal to many for its warmth and melody.

Luigini: Ballet Egyptian. City of Birmingham Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. One side, and **Coleridge-Taylor: Petite Suite de Concert, Op. 77.** Queen's Hall Light Orchestra conducted by Sydney Torch. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2180) \$4.

Ideal summer fare is presented on this disc and again proves that some care *can* be exercised by recording companies when it comes to couplings on LP records. The great popular favorite, *Ballet Egyptian*, and the lesser-known but equally pleasant and gracious *Petite Suite* make a brace of light orchestral works that are difficult to resist.

Brahms: Serenade No. 1 in D, Op. 11. Concert Hall Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1087) \$5.95.

This unique work dates from 1857-58 and is the first of Brahms' compositions exclusively for orchestra. It was conceived first as a chamber music work for nine instruments but shortly after its first performance the composer revised it for full orchestra. It is in six movements and as one listens to it he has the feeling that it is just what it is—an enlarged chamber music work. It abounds in delightful melodies and makes most pleasant listening. Henry Swoboda gives it a carefully thought out and gracefully delicate performance.

Gluck: Orfeo ed Euridice—Dance of the blessed spirits (Act II). One side, and **Bach: Suite No. 3 in D—Air.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (V-12-3301) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3301) \$1.16.

Two lovely melodic selections handled with loving

care by the great maestro—a record that is going to give a lot of persons great enjoyment.

J. Strauss: Die Fledermaus—Overture. RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (V-12-3296) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3296) \$1.16.

This tuneful overture is given a bang-up performance under the brilliant direction of Fritz Reiner. It's grand music for a warm summer evening.

CONCERTO



Scriabin: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra. One and one-half sides, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra.** Paul Badura-Skoda (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5068) \$5.95.

New things continue to make their way to LP discs, and this pair of piano concertos will probably be as new to you as to LP. The Scriabin will appeal to those who like the Chopin piano concertos, because it sounds very Chopinesque. Scriabin patterned his early works after Chopin; in fact, his early adherence to the style of the Polish composer earned for him the title of "The Russian Chopin." It is conceded that Scriabin excelled Chopin in the matter of orchestration, even at the early age of twenty-six, when the present work was written. The high point of the work is perhaps the slow movement—a set of variations on an especially lovely theme. We would like to point out that this concerto has nothing in common with Scriabin's later works where he began to get mystical ideas and wrote music which sounds peculiar to most of us. There is nothing very impressive about the concerto; it seems to have been written with nothing more in mind than trying to create some attractive music. That idea is a fast fading one of late among classical composers.

Where Scriabin modelled after Chopin, Rimsky patterned after Liszt. This rather short one-movement work is something of a fantasia, with three subdivisions of tempo. In Rimsky's own words, he said: "In all ways the concerto proved a chip from Liszt's concertos." We would agree and even elaborate on the fact that it is little more than a chip, for if you think Liszt's works rather thin, you will be able to see through this one with unusual ease. It is an almost trivial thing for a man of thirty-eight and of Rimsky's accomplishments to have committed to paper.

Paul Badura-Skoda has distinguished himself in some LP releases of late, and again proves a very fine pianist. He plays this music with conviction, and has an adequate technique to back it up. The indefatigable Swoboda supplies alert accompaniments and Westminster is, as usual, on hand with reproduction that ranks with today's best. The tone of the piano is notably steady and of lovely timbre. S.

Ibert: Concerto for Flute and Orchestra. Peter Lukas Graf (flute) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Desarzens. One side, and **Martin: Concerto for Seven Wind Instruments, Tympani, Percussion and Strings.** Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Desarzens. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1109) \$5.95.

Music for the flute is not plentiful. What little there is comes chiefly from the classic and romantic schools; composers of today have paid scant attention to its use in anything but the full symphony orchestra. Jacques Ibert has, with this concerto, helped to establish new interest in the flute as an individual instrument.

Never loath to inject a little wit into his work, he adds poetry, whimsy, and brilliant musicianship as well to give us a modern classic which even the more conservative music lover may grow to like. Mr. Graf plays deftly and with an ease that renders the more difficult passages mere child's play.

Frank Martin's *Concerto for Seven Wind Instruments* is an interesting work that requires more playings than one to grasp its subtleties. Not well known in this country, Mr. Martin, born in Switzerland in 1890, has produced many works of unusual variety and great interest. We trust that this introduction to his music will arouse a demand for further importations.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Bach: Das Musikalische Opfer ("The Musical Offering"). Chamber group conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5070) \$5.95.

At the conclusion of the generous and interesting program notes which Kurt List has supplied on the record folder, we find this sentence: "For all its involved plan and execution, the *Musical Offering* is one of the most moving and emotionally profound of all Bach's compositions." We think that is going out on a limb pretty far, considering all of Bach's vast output, notably the church music, passions, cantatas, and organ chorale-preludes. But that there is emotional content in the *Musical Offering* could hardly be denied after hearing the present performance. The soloists play with an extraordinary amount of feeling and beauty of tonal quality and shading. Their phrasing is graceful, and the whole effect is one of serene beauty. Even if the music means nothing to you, you cannot help being impressed with the sheer loveliness of the sounds that are made.

The version offered here is the Robert Vuataz arrangement, which contrasts differing solo woodwinds with each other or with stringed instruments and leaves the execution of the figured bass to the harpsichord. This treatment makes clear the plasticity of the individual voices and lightens the density of the polyphonic web. The order in which the thirteen sections are presented is logical, the whole Vuataz arrangement being a masterful work. The performing group comprises two violins, viola, cello,

flute, oboe, English horn, bassoon, and cembalo.

Despite the fact that the *Musical Offering* originated as an improvisation, there is nothing extemporaneous about the work. In it Bach attempts to wring every possible canonic imitation from a given theme, in such a manner that the theme appears different each time in its harmonic content. Just how many persons will be sufficiently interested in these musical problems to enjoy this music, we cannot imagine—nor will those not interested find the music of sufficient beauty in itself to make them desire it. But for those who want to try it, the present disc is a blessing. Westminster has captured an outstanding performance, made in Austria, and supplied reproduction of the finest. It deserves to win some new friends for this masterpiece. S.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 10 in G, Op. 96. Tossy Spivakovsky (violin) and Rudolf Firkusny (piano). One side, and **Violin Favorites.** Tossy Spivakovsky (violin) accompanied by Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*CML-4402) \$5.45.

One of the loveliest of Beethoven's sonatas for violin and piano, No. 10 in G, has had less representation on discs than some of the others. Fritz Kreisler and Franz Rupp recorded this work in a Beethoven Society set, and Simon Goldberg and Lili Kraus made one for Parlophone; both renditions are now in the "difficult to obtain" category. Roman Totenberg and Adolph Baller were, until the release of this disc, the only performers of this work on LP. We found, on comparison of the two LP versions, that both are beautifully played but the newer release has quieter surfaces.

Mr. Spivakovsky, in addition to the Beethoven work, presents some well-known violin compositions to complete the disc. They are: *Caprice Viennois* (Kreisler); *Valse Scherzo, Op. 34* (Tchaikovsky); *Sonata in G, Op. 3, No. 8* (Paganini); *Caprice, Op. 1, No. 24* (Paganini); *Introduction and Tarantella, Op. 43* (Sarasate). Except for the ever-present *Caprice Viennois*, we found this record highly satisfactory in quality of performance and choice of selections.

Thompson: String Quartet in D minor. Guilet String Quartet. One side, and **Barber: Sonata for 'Cello and Piano, Op. 6.** Raya Garbousova (violin) and Erich Itor Kahn (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1062) \$5.95.

We have here two contemporary works written in a conventional mold. We do not mean, by this statement, to dismiss them as uninteresting; we wish merely to indicate that a composition written in our time need not be condemned as "modern" because of its date of composition. Both works under consideration here resemble the musical writings of the late Romantics of the nineteenth century in form and treatment. There are, to be sure, touches of modernity in them which add interest—rather like the piquant sauce in cookery. The Guilet String Quartet

plays admirably in the Thompson *Quartet* and Raya Garbousova handles the darkly emotional part assigned her in the Barber *Sonata* with just the right amount of control. Erich Kahn's piano work, while not meant to be an accompaniment, skillfully abets the 'cello's deep tones, reminding one of a dark, rich fabric shot through with bits of gold thread.

Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in D minor, Op. 108. Jascha Heifetz (violin) and William Kapell (piano). 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1523) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1523) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-71) \$4.67.

Brahms once made the melancholy statement that a man's productive life ended with his fiftieth year. He belied his own words by composing among other things, his third and fourth symphonies and the *Sonata No. 3* after he had reached that year. The *Symphonies Nos. 3 and 4* are certainly Brahms at his most vigorous and not the work of a man in his dotage. As for the *Sonata No. 3*, it is a chamber work of tender romanticism and flowing melodic line; it is almost a musical reminiscence made by a man of mature years who has a keen interest in living and a philosophic compassion toward his fellow man that come from a well-ordered life.

Messrs. Heifetz and Kapell combine perfect teamwork and brilliant playing to give chamber music lovers a sonata that is, by turns, poetic, passionate, and gay.

Haydn: Die Sieben Worte des Erlösers am Kreuze ("The Seven Last Words of Christ"). Three sides, and **Haydn: Quartet in B-flat, Op. 103** ("Unfinished"), and **Haydn: Quartet in F, Op. 3, No. 5.** Amadeus String Quartet. 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WL-5064/5) \$11.90.

Only a few months ago Concert Hall issued a splendid LP recording (*CH-CHS-1084) of Haydn's "The Seven Last Words of Christ" by the Guilet String Quartet. It was well received by the critics and public; thus it would seem that another recording was hardly called for. This is another example of the thing that many record dealers throughout the country are complaining about. However, it seems there is nothing that anyone can do about such duplication.

Two versions are now available; as far as we are concerned, it would seem that the choice would be whether you prefer Beethoven's *Elegischer Gesang*, Op. 118, which fills the last side of the Concert Hall recording, or the two Haydn Quartets on the present records.

A rather lengthy review of the Concert Hall recording of "The Seven Last Words" appeared in our April 1951 issue.

Rachmaninoff: Trio in D minor for Piano, Violin and 'Cello, Op. 9 ("Elegiac"). Compinsky Trio. 1-12" disc (*ALCO-LP-1008) \$4.85.

We are indeed glad to see this fine performance of Rachmaninoff's "Elegiac Trio" made available on

an LP disc. The Compinskys (two brothers and a sister) are ideal interpreters of the work and Alco has achieved the best in reproduction.

You will doubtless recall that Rachmaninoff composed this work in 1893 shortly after the death of his musical idol, Tchaikovsky. It was written in memory of that great Russian composer and very much in the style and mood of the trio that Tchaikovsky himself had composed eleven years previously as a tribute to Nicolai Rubinstein. Rachmaninoff's work is in the grand manner of the romantic period of Russian music which flourished in the latter half of the 19th century. If such music interests you, we strongly suggest that you investigate the present recording.

CHORAL



Machaut: Notre Dame Mass. (Sung in Latin). The Desoff Choirs with the New York Brass Ensemble conducted by Paul Boepple. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1107) \$5.95.

Guillaume de Machaut is a man right out of the Renaissance. Poet, hunter and musician, he also dabbled, in true Renaissance fashion, in various and sundry political intrigues. In the year 1364 Machaut wrote what has come to be considered his most important work, the *Notre Dame Mass*. This composition is traditionally said to have been composed for the coronation of Charles V at Rheims, although there is no positive proof that this was the case. The *Mass* is an extended work for four voices and has the distinction of being (with the exception of an anonymous *Messe de Tournai*) the oldest extant polyphonic setting of the liturgy.

While specialists will find this music of absorbing interest, especially while following the various rhythmic patterns Machaut employs, it is as a prime example of great Renaissance music that the *Mass* will have its widest popular appeal. The grandeur, the nobility of thought and the essential "completeness" of the work are at once unique and magnificent. Several hearings are necessary, however, to bring out these many beauties.

The Desoff Choirs, who celebrated their 25th Anniversary last year, sing the work with persuasiveness and excellence of tone. The New York Brass Ensemble provides a background that lends a cathedral-like air that is most suitable.

Concert Hall's recording is good with the possible exception of not capturing the Brass Ensemble in all its sonority; they seem a bit far away. W.

Palestrina: Missa "Iste Confessor." One side, and **Palestrina: Missa Sine Nomine.** (Sung in Latin). Welch Chorale directed by James B. Welch. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3016) \$5.95.

Two hitherto unrecorded Masses of Palestrina, *Iste Confessor* and *Missa Sine Nomine*, are issued this month by Allegro.

The reforms of Palestrina and the edicts of the Council of Trent regarding the use of secular tunes

in church music are well known. Oddly enough, despite these strictures, the *Missa Sine Nomine* is based on a French Folk Song, *Je suis déshéritée*. So carefully is it woven into the texture of the music however, that unless one knows the tune, it is virtually undetectable. This particular Mass is very lovely, being one of the more tender expressions of Palestrina. There are moments of grandeur, nonetheless, that provide interesting contrast. The obverse side is devoted to the Mass *Iste Confessor*, a concise utterance, largely devoid of the ornamentation favored by the Gothic School. The result, while severe, is in keeping with the text and the service for which it was intended.

The Welch Chorale is noted for its performances of this type of music. They are features of the Church of St. Philip Neri (New York) where each Sunday they sing at High Mass, usually the works of the great composers of the Renaissance. Their singing here is impeccable, being in good taste and stylistically accurate. The recording, as accomplished by Allegro's engineers, is good, avoiding the pitfalls usually associated with choral recordings. The text of the Mass (both are settings of the same words) in Latin and English is printed on the record jacket. W.

Vecchi: L'Amfiparnaso ("Comedia Harmonica"). (Sung in Italian). Chorus of the Accademia Corale of the Circolo Musicale di Lecco directed by Guido Camillucci. 1-12" disc (*CE-50066) \$5.95.

Towards the end of the 16th Century, profound changes began to take place in the style and nature of Italian music. The Madrigal was one of the chief forms affected—its a *cappella* nature was undermined, cycles of madrigals and madrigal comedies appeared. The whole art began to approach the domain of the theatre. These polyphonic comedies assigned dramatic characters to the chorus that conducted dialogues. *L'Amfiparnaso* is such a work. It consists of fourteen five-part unaccompanied madrigals arranged in three acts. The characters are those of the *commedia dell'arte*, Harlequin, Columbine, Pantaloon and others.

Orazio Vecchi (c. 1550-1605) was an undisputed master of the madrigal style; his bold and vivacious manner coupled with his obvious mastery of the choral medium make of him an outstanding figure in the history of music. *L'Amfiparnaso*, his masterpiece, was first sung in 1594 and remained popular for some years, even after the advent of opera *per se*. The performance here recorded is expressively sung by the Circolo Musicale di Lecco under Mo. Guido Camillucci. The music is well suited to recorded performance for in the *Prologo* Vecchi writes, "But know then, that this spectacle of which I speak, is to be seen with the mind, which it enters by the ears, and not by the eyes."

Cetra has recorded the set well and has included all the necessary information in scholarly notes and a complete Italian text with a faithful English translation. The work is one that can be enjoyed by all,

but it will be of surpassing interest to those who are enamored of Renaissance and Pre-Baroque music. W.

Milhaud: Sacred Service. Fredric Lechner (baritone), Martin Wolfson (narrator), Alexander D. Richardson (organ), with the Central Synagogue Choir directed by Lazar Weiner. 2-12" discs in folder (*CH-CHS-1103) \$11.90.

As we have pointed out previously in reviewing Milhaud's compositions, he always appeals to us as a modern composer whose greatest strength is in his clarity and directness. Nearly all of his compositions are readily accessible to most of us, and the result is often as pleasant as it is surprising. The *Sacred Service* is plainly French in character, with a coloring that is at once and always Milhaud. This music is as uncompromisingly Milhaud as Verdi's *Requiem* is Verdi. It is at the same time music of deep reverence, rare simplicity, and much beauty. As sacred music, the text must be taken into consideration and kept in mind along with the music. It makes an impact, an impact which we would imagine is even greater in the synagogue than in your home. But it can be enjoyed in the same way as the great masses, passions, cantatas, and other church music masterpieces are when heard outside the church. We do not suppose too many persons will investigate this music; but for any who might be interested, we would particularly urge them not to fear it as something ugly because it is modern. It is not that at all; rather it is something that will impress you greatly. For those interested only in the music, we will mention that the spoken readings from the liturgy (spoken against quiet organ music in the background) had best been omitted and may prove out of place.

The performance is by a distinguished group who gave the work its premiere last January in New York City. Their presentation appears to us to be one of sincerity and knowledge as well as skill. The work consists of 22 vocal settings and prayers with organ accompaniment. The Lecho Dodi, from the Friday evening Liturgy, is an outstanding part of the music, and the Veohavto and Adon Olom, we thought, were particularly fine too. The reproduction is good considering the dull-toned organ used, which is a shade too distant at times. S.

Sweet and Low. Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1528) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-96) \$4.67.

The Robert Shaw Chorale is certainly a choral group that is in a class by itself. These old-time favorites are handled with loving care, and the results are not only pleasing but of high artistic value. Grandmothers, their children, and their grandchildren all over this land of ours will surely enjoy listening to these delightful renditions. The selections are: *Sweet and Low*; *In the Gloaming*; *The Rosary*; *None But the Lonely Heart*; *Through the Years*; *Ave Maria* (Schubert); *All Thro' the Night*; and *Lullaby* (Brahms).

At Home with the Trapp Family Singers. Trapp Family Singers directed by Father Franz Wasner. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1101) \$5.95.

With this thoroughly delightful record we bring the Trapp Family Singers into our own homes; and Mother Trapp, after introducing her famous family of five girls and two boys and their priest and friend, Father Wasner, proceeds to announce each selection with a few appropriate and charming remarks. When we heard that there was some speaking on this disc we were dead set against it and decided to say that the music was lovely to listen to, if only the speaking had been omitted. In this frame of mind we placed this record on our phonograph and sat back, prepared to endure it rather than enjoy it; but after the first few minutes, we entirely lost our prejudice and found ourselves waiting with eager delight to hear Mother Trapp introduce the next piece and to hear her famous family sing it—each selection meant so much more to us after we listened to what Mother Trapp had to say about it. We predict that the Trapp Family Singers will be warmly welcomed into thousands of homes all over America by means of this utterly captivating record.

There are ten selections on this fascinating disc, among which will be found: *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*; *The Silver Swan*; *The Children's Blessing*; and *Evening Prayer* from "Hansel und Gretel."

OPERA



Cilea: Adriana Lecouvreur (complete). (Sung in Italian). Carla Gavazzi, Loretta di Lelio (sopranos); Miti Truccato Pace, Jone Farolfi (mezzo-sopranos); Giacinto Prandelli, Aldo Bertocci, Tommaso Soley, Remo Rossetti (tenors); Saturno Meletti (baritone); Plinio Clabassi, Pasquale Lombardo (bassos); with EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Alfredo Simonetto. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-218) \$17.85.

With the death of Francesco Cilea, in 1950, the school of *verismo* came to an end. Cilea, with Puccini, Mascagni, Leoncavallo and Giordano, was one of the leading exponents of naturalism in opera and is the least known of the group in this country. Indeed, his fame abroad rests solely on two operas, *L'Arlesiana* and the one here recorded, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, which had its world *première* at Milan in November, 1902.

In making this work available to opera lovers in this country, Cetra has done a real service. By casting it as they did and by assigning Alfredo Simonetto as the conductor, its success should be assured. In the title role is a gorgeous dramatic soprano, new to records, Carla Gavazzi. She possesses a large and beautiful voice, capable of infinite coloring and expression that is used with unerring sense of the theatre. In short, she is a singing actress of the Claudia Muzio type. Throughout the taxing role she is magnificent and in the last act, her singing of *Poveri fiori*

is calculated to bring the house down while the recitation in the third act of the lines from *Phèdre* is spine-tingling and superb theatre. As Maurizio, Count of Saxony, Giacinto Prandelli reveals an heroic tenor of true operatic proportions, free from mannerisms and mock heroics. His singing, moreover, is notable for its good taste and fine sense of style. In the role of Michonnet, Saturno Meletti sings and acts with fervor, providing a forceful and at the same time a thoroughly musical characterization of the tragic stage director. In the supporting roles Miti Truccato Pace and Plinio Clabassi as the Princess and Prince de Bouillon are outstanding. The former is that *rara avis*, a true mezzo-soprano, while the latter is a basso who obviously could handle, in creditable fashion, much larger roles.

Alfredo Simonetto's direction is imaginative and well paced. Every ounce of feeling and drama in the score is realized, but nothing is exaggerated—his performance is a true re-creation.

For all this excellent singing and playing, Cetra has provided one of their best recording jobs. As is usual with this company, a fine English-Italian libretto is included. For one of the year's most pleasant surprises, hear this first recording of Cilea's half-forgotten *Adriana Lecouvreur*. W.

Weber: Der Freischütz (complete). (Sung in German). Maud Cunitz, Emmy Loose (sopranos); Hans Hopf (tenor); Alfred Poell (baritone); Otto Edelmann, Marjan Rus (bassos); with the Vienna State Opera Chorus and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLPA-5) \$17.85.

One of the big things, phonographically speaking, that came to us at the close of World War II was the phenomenal recording, on Deutsche Grammophon, of an abridged version of *Der Freischütz* (TNR Oct. '49). For sheer musical excitement and technical brilliance, nothing like this had ever been heard on records before. Now there is a "complete" version on LP issued by London.

This performance, it must be stated at the outset, is a disappointment; and the responsibility rests squarely on the shoulders of the conductor, Otto Ackermann. His inability to inspire his singers and orchestra results in a production that is as flat as the records on which it is pressed. His tempi, from the overture on through to the final chords, are dreary and dispirited. The singers, taking their cue from the conductor are, for the most part, content to remain themselves; they are satisfied to sing all the notes, but nothing more. The ladies come off best. Emmy Loose as Annchen is quite good, even becoming a bit spirited at times. Agathe, in the person of Maud Cunitz, is vocally pleasing but dramatically non-existent. Her big aria, *Leise, leise fromme Weise*, is dragged, and loses much of its effect. The Caspar and Max, Marjan Rus and Hans Hopf, in addition to being lethargic are in obviously poor voice. Herr Rus is apathetic in his aria, *Der*

holle Netz, and Herr Hopf muddles around sadly in *Durch die Wälder*—the music seems to defeat him somehow. The minor roles are in more or less capable hands, with Alfred Poell again turning in a fine performance as Prince Ottokar.

Thus the whole affair is one that had great promise but its potentialities are never realized. In addition, London again fails in its obligations to the prospective buyer by parsimoniously omitting a libretto. The recording ranges from excellent to fair. The owners of the original Deutsche Gramophon pressings have nothing to worry about; even the dubbed LP version (see "NEW LP RELEASES") is superior to this present set.

W.

Wagner: Tristan und Isolde (complete). (Sung in German). Margarete Bäumer, Erna Westenerger (sopranos); Ludwig Suthaus, Theodor Horand (tenors); Gottlob Frick, Karl Wolfram (baritones); with the Chorus of Mitteldeutsche Rundfunk and the Gewandhaus (Leipzig) Orchestra conducted by Franz Konwitschny. 5-12" discs in album (*URANIA-URLP-202) \$30.25.

This month sees the release of the long awaited complete, uncut *Tristan und Isolde*; it runs to ten LP sides or a little over three and three quarter hours. Cuts averaging 25 to 30 minutes are usually made in this country, thus a considerable portion of the opera will be relatively unfamiliar to American ears. The question of cutting a major musical work is always a vexing one, and there are good arguments both for and against the practice. Personally, this reviewer feels that although Wagner's score gains in impact when edited for actual performance, the present recording is of tremendous interest because it is heard as the composer intended it.

The cast, headed by Margarete Bäumer and Ludwig Suthaus, is competent if not of outstanding vocal brilliance. Mme. Bäumer does wonders with the remains of her voice; but alas, the music requires a glorious young one. There is often a sense of strain—a feeling that she is trying desperately hard to make the grade. The result is not musical. Ludwig Suthaus is a *Heldentenor*, throaty, large-voiced, very masculine. He, too, tends to shout, and when he does there are some serious lapses in pitch. His voice is generally of good quality, but in the famous *Liebesnacht* in Act 2, he completely overshadows Miss Baumer and the orchestra. This may be due, in part, to incorrect microphone placement, but the result does violence to Wagner. The third principal, King Mark, is sung very beautifully by Gottlob Frick. His long narrative at the close of Act 2 is one of the outstanding features of the set. Brangane, in the capable hands of Erna Westenerger, is both convincing and well-sung. The minor roles are all handled well, Aloys Kuhnert, as the sailor, doing a particularly creditable job.

The Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under Franz Konwitschny plays the long score with loving care. Konwitschny does not indulge in virtuoso manner-

isms, under-playing the music rather than giving way to sensationalism. The recording, considering the length of the work, is extremely good, being marred only by occasional tape flutter, noticeable mainly in the passages for wood winds. Excellent notes and a complete German-English libretto are included. As an over-all performance, stylistically and emotionally, it is good—worth studying; and it has the undeniable advantage of being complete—a feature that, on the phonograph, has much to recommend it.

W.

Verdi: Don Carlos—Scenes from Act III. (Sung in German). Hilde Konetzni (soprano); Elisabeth Hoengen (mezzo-soprano); Georg Oeggel (baritone); Alois Pernerstorfer, Alexander Welitsch (bassos); with the Vienna Opera Orchestra conducted by Erwin Baltzer. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8144) \$4.98.

Verdi's *Don Carlos*, thanks to the Metropolitan telecast, has taken a new lease on life and Capitol now issues a fine LP disc that supplements the RCA record nicely. To be sure there is a duplication of *O don fatale* and another version of the great soliloquy *Ella giammai m'amo* but the rest is new and well worth having.

Alois Pernerstorfer sings the music of Philip II. His delineation of the distraught monarch is far superior to Italo Tajo's, the soliloquy coming off very effectively despite the fact that his voice is somewhat light for the role. There is considerable feeling in his performance even though it lacks the regal quality that a Chaliapine or a Christoff brings to the character. Herr Pernerstorfer is joined by Alexander Welitsch (The Grand Inquisitor) in the effective *Inquisition Scene*. This is new to records and, as it is one of the great passages in all opera, it is more than welcome. In addition, it is well sung. There follows the great Quartet, with Elisabeth (Konetzni), Eboli (Hoengen), Rodrigo (Oeggel) and Philip. The presentation of this music is impressive and stirring. The running scene between Elisabeth and Eboli, concluding with Eboli's banishment and the aria *O don Fatale* is excellent and, although Mme. Hoengen is not so gifted vocally as RCA's Blanche Thebom, is dramatic and convincing.

The recording is not as good as on the Victor disc but is nonetheless listenable, particularly in view of the fact that this is the only recording of much of this music. It supplements the other record admirably and belongs in the library of all opera lovers. One further point—these excerpts are sung in German. This is unfortunate but not fatal.

W.

Puccini Opera Highlights. (Sung in Italian). Rosetta Noli (soprano); Rina Cavallari (mezzo-soprano); Giuseppe Campora, Ferrando Ferrari (tenors) with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-325) \$4.95.

London Records inaugurates, with this disc, what promises to be an interesting and unique set of recordings. The idea is to present, via a series of recordings, the most promising young singers in various

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

European countries. Following this one from Italy, there are scheduled representative voices from Germany, Austria, France, Holland, Switzerland, Denmark and England. It is a happy idea and promises to be not only of paramount interest but also of considerable musical value.

The outstanding artist in these *Puccini Opera Highlights* is twenty-six year old Rosetta Noli. She has a lyrico-dramatic soprano that has warmth and color. Moreover she sings intelligently, with excellent method which is coupled with a high degree of musicianship. In the aria *Tu che di ciel sei cinta* from "Turandot" she gives a sterling performance. Sgra. Noli is joined by Guiseppe Campora in the love duet from "Madama Butterfly" and the lovely *O soave fanciulla* from "La Boheme." Also included is the duet *Tutti i fiori* from "Madama Butterfly," in which Miss Noli is assisted by Rina Cavallari as Suzuki. All this music is very well sung and serves as an excellent vehicle for the display of these fresh, youthful voices. Guiseppe Campora is a spirited twenty-seven year old, who is happily free from many of the mannerisms that so often afflict Italian tenors. His musicianship is sound and, although the use of the high "C" at the close of the *Boheme* duet is not in the best taste, it is an almost universal procedure. Sgr. Campora's singing of *E Lucevan le stelle* is a creditable job. Not in the same class with the foregoing is Ferrando Ferrari, a twenty-two year old tenor. His choice of aria, *Nessun dorma* from "Turandot," was not a happy one, for it is too difficult and lies too high for him, causing him to exhibit a "bleat" that is unpleasant in the extreme. On the basis of this performance it is difficult to find anything "promising" about this young man except the promise of a short life but a merry one as a singer, unless he learns to use his voice better. The recording is uniformly good.

W.

Mozart: La Finta Giardiniera, K. 196 (complete) (Sung in German). Margot Guillaume, Elinor Junker-Giesen, Gertrud Jenne (sopranos); Hetty Plümacher (alto); Werner Hohmann, Alfred Pfeifle (tenors); Gustav Neidlinger (basso); with the Ton-Studio Orchestra of Stuttgart conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 3-12" discs in album (*PE-RIOD-SPLP-531) \$18.50.

"My opera was performed yesterday, the 13th, for the first time and was such a success that it is impossible for me to describe the applause to Mama." Thus wrote the 19 year old Mozart on the premiere of *La Finta Giardiniera*. Actually, however, the work was not a real success, for no Italian opera house interested itself in the work. It was later translated into German, and as *Das verstellte Gärtnermädchen* made its way all over south and western Germany.

This is one opera that has real story trouble. The libretto is a grotesque combination of *opera buffa* with two characters designated as *Parti Serie*. This division into *seria* and *buffa* parts was an experimental affair and proves to be an impossible and incom-

patible mixture. Then too, Mozart had not yet acquired the ability to characterize musically to the necessary degree, although it must be admitted that the set-up of the opera gave little opportunity of writing anything more than a string of exit arias. The finales are in dialog form as opposed to the grand contrapuntal ensembles he wrote for the much later *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*.

The cast is a strong one. They have the requisite sense of style for Mozart, and they do justice to the witty and entertaining music he wrote. There are two fine tenors in the persons of Werner Hohmann (Count Belfiore) and Alfred Pfeifle (Podestà). Margot Guillaume (Sandrina) and Gertrude Jenne (Arminda) are both more than equal to all occasions. Gustav Neidlinger is a top-flight basso who gives a fine account of himself and the role of Nardo, especially in the aria *In der welschen Art und Weise* wherein he sings Italian, French and English besides the German of the text!

Rolf Reinhardt directs with rare taste and sense of style. He senses and brings out all the "musical" quality with which the score is invested. The work is virtually complete with excisions of six arias and most of the recitative, but these omissions are made up for in an exceptionally intelligent libretto that indicates the cuts and outlines the action that they covered. Period's recording is very good. For those who can overlook the structural weaknesses of the opera, it is a delight from beginning to end. W.

Auber: Fra Diavolo (complete). (Sung in German). Irma Beilke (soprano); Hans Hopf, Lorenz Fehenberg (tenors); Arno Schellenberg (baritone); Gottlob Frick, Kurt Böhme (bassos); Chorus of the Dresden State Opera and Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Karl Elmendorff. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-204) \$11.90.

Daniel François Esprit Auber, once one of the most feted of composers, has not been dealt with too kindly by time. In this country he is remembered by one or two overtures, although a few may recall with pleasure a magnificent motion picture entitled "The Devil's Brother." This movie, which featured Dennis King, Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy, was, of course, *Fra Diavolo* and was also, if memory serves correctly, a fairly faithful transcription in addition to being one of the funniest films ever made.

Fra Diavolo remains, then, almost the sole survivor of the many light and grand operas Auber wrote during his long life. It is easy to understand its popularity—there is an excellent plot and delightful music to go with it. This first complete recording has Hans Hopf in the name part and Herr Hopf is much more at ease in this music than he was in the role of Max in the London recording of *Der Freischütz*. He sings charmingly and is altogether adequate. Irma Beilke, sounding as youthful as ever, is a piquant Zerlina. Arno Schellenberg, as Lord Kookburn, displays a fine bass-baritone and an equally good sense of characterization. The others in the

cast join in the spirit of the affair, making this effervescent work come wholly alive. Undoubtedly much of the credit for the success of the performance accrues to Karl Elmendorff, whom old timers will remember as the director of the old Bayreuth recordings of *Tristan und Isolde* and *Tannhäuser* issued some twenty-odd years ago by Columbia. He seems to have kept his youth, spirit and sense of humor through those trying years, for he turns in a sterling performance.

The recording is good—a complete German-English libretto is supplied. *Fra Diavolo* should find a place in the record library alongside *Die Fledermaus*.
W.

Puccini: Manon Lescaut (complete). (Sung in Italian). Maria Zamboni (soprano); Francesco Merli (tenor); Lorenzo Conati (baritone); Attilio Bordini (basso); with chorus and the Milan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Lorenzo Molajoli. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-111) \$12.18.

Manon Lescaut is the earliest of Puccini's operas to hold a permanent place in the repertory in this country. Its first performance in the United States was in Philadelphia on 29 August 1894. It arrived at the Metropolitan on 18 January 1907 and Puccini was among those present, it being his first visit to this country. The performance with Cavalieri, Caruso and Scotti was, as might be expected, well received.

The outstanding feature of this performance is the conducting of Cav. Lorenzo Molajoli. His direction is impassioned and theatrical—an excellent combination for a work that makes no attempt to be anything other than Italian opera. Maria Zamboni, in the name part, is fine, portraying the ill-starred Manon with warmth and understanding. Vocally her work is above reproach, being well sung by any standards. Francesco Merli is well known to record collectors. He has a large voice but an unmusical one. The upper register, in particular, sounds shrill and strained. On the credit side, however, it must be noted that his passionate singing carries a large amount of conviction. Lorenzo Conati as Lescaut, Manon's brother, is satisfactory as are the others in the longish cast.

The transference from the original 78 r.p.m. masters has been deftly accomplished and, aside from the inherent faults of these early recordings, is an astonishing job. The packaging is new (for Columbia) and, *mirabile dictu*, a complete Italian-English libretto is included.
W.

Verdi: Ernani (abridged). (Sung in Italian). Soloists with Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Lorenzo Molajoli. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4407) \$5.45.

Donizetti: L'Elisir d'Amore (abridged). (Sung in Italian). Soloists with Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Lorenzo Molajoli. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4408) \$5.45.

Columbia issues this month, "by request," two

operas in abridged form that have long been staples in their Italian catalogue—they have not been released in this country. The recording in each instance dates from the late twenties or early thirties and thus, while electrical, is far below present standards.

The *Ernani* cast is an astonishingly good one. Antonio Melandri in the title role sings with spirit, conviction and considerable beauty of tone. Iva Pacetti does a fine Elvira, tonally accurate and dramatically sound. Don Carlo, in the capable hands of Gino Vanelli emerges as a first-rate job as does the Don Silva of Corrado Zambelli. The over-all performance under the veteran Molajoli is well paced and musically. The abridgement is severe, especially as regards the main arias, but much of the various solo arias have been recorded many times and are easily available. Technically, the recording is quite acceptable once one gets used to its limitations.

L'Elisir d'Amore does not fare as well. The cast is by no means as good as for *Ernani* and the general *esprit de corps* is on a much lower level. Cristy Solari is a run-of-the-mill tenor, given to gulping and sobbing in a somewhat nasal voice. Sgra. Tellini is on the shrill side, Dr. Dulcamara (Eduardo Faticonti) has virtually no voice (he is merely designated as *buffa* in the cast) and Lorenzo Conti as Sergeant Belcore is the best of the lot which is not, one is afraid, giving him his due for he is a very good baritone. Here, too, while the abridgement is drastic, it has been tastefully accomplished. The recording is only fair and Molajoli does his usual fine job with the score.

For both sets Columbia has supplied only the English text which, as has been pointed out before in these columns, is virtually useless.
W.

An Operatic Recital. (Sung in Italian and German).

Anton Dermota (tenor) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. One side, and **A Lieder Recital.** Anton Dermota (tenor) accompanied by Hilde Dermota (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-345) \$5.95.

In a record designed to demonstrate his capabilities, the young Yugoslav tenor Anton Dermota sings Mozart, Strauss, Schumann and Wolf. In most instances everything comes off superlatively well. Mr. Dermota has a fine lyric tenor that is well trained and, in addition, he has better than average musical intelligence to go with it.

One side of this LP disc is devoted to operatic arias. There are the two from *Don Giovanni*, both sung with excellent sense of style. In *Il mio tesoro* the florid passages seem a little awkward; but then few singers nowadays can negotiate such music smoothly. From *Zauberflöte* Dermota sings the *Bildnisarie* in curiously colorless fashion and also indulges in some very unmusical German, pronouncing the pronoun *ich* as "ick" rather than the accepted "ish". The final aria is from Richard Strauss' last opera *Capriccio*. Musically the selection, *Kein andres* suffers by com-

* indicates LP 3 1/2" rpm.

♢ indicates 45 rpm.

parison with the Mozart which precedes it, but it is attractively presented.

The *lieder*, on the other side, are seven in number. There are two of Schumann's Op. 25 songs: *Der Nussbaum* and *Die Lotusblume*; three by Hugo Wolf: *Nimmersatte Liebe*, *Der Musikant*, and *Auf ein altes Bild*; and two by Richard Strauss: the inevitable *Ständchen* and *Zueignung*. All are sung very well with real expression and consummate ease. It is a treat to hear *lieder* sung in such an understanding and sincere fashion.

For the operatic excerpts expert accompaniments are supplied by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Karl Böhm, while for the songs it is Hilde Dermota the singer's wife at the piano. The recording is above reproach and the disc is highly recommended. W.

Borodin: Prince Igor—I hate a dreary life (Prologue). **Rimsky-Korsakov: Sadko**—The roaring waves besiege our shores (Song of the Viking Guest). (Sung in Russian). Boris Christoff (basso) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. 1-12" disc (V-DB-21127) \$1.84.

Moussorgsky: Khovantchina—Dositheu's aria (Act V). (Sung in Russian). Boris Christoff (basso) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. 1-12" disc (V-DB-21207) \$1.84.

Moussorgsky: Boris Godounov—Pimen's Monologue—Still one more page (Act I). (Sung in Russian). Boris Christoff (basso) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Nicolai Malko. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1938) \$1.32.

Collectors of operatic recordings in this country will doubtless be delighted to know that the three discs listed above arrived in a recent shipment from abroad. Christoff has made a name for himself among record collectors over here because of the excellence of his earlier recordings, and we suggest that those who are interested should place their orders for these discs promptly with a dealer who specializes in imported records. All of the present recordings are well up the standard that Mr. Christoff has previously set. Need we give them greater praise?

Puccini: Turandot—Nessun dorma! (Act III). One side, and **Donizetti: L'Elisir d'Amore**—Quanto è bella (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Stanford Robinson. 1-12" disc (V-DB-21138) \$1.84.

Verdi: Il Trovatore—Di quella pira (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by U. Berrettoni. One side, and **Puccini: Manon Lescaut**—No! pazzo son! guardate (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) and G. Noto (baritone) with orchestra conducted by U. Berrettoni. 1-10" disc (V-DA-5398) \$1.32.

New operatic recordings by the great Gigli are

always of prime interest to collectors of his records in this country. The two discs listed above arrived in a recent shipment from abroad. They contain recordings that are typical of the art of this renowned singer. We predict for them a hearty welcome on this side of the Atlantic.

Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro—Non più andrai. One side, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Aprite un po' quegli occhi. (Sung in Italian). Tito Gobbi (baritone) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by James Robertson. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1946) \$1.32.

We believe that most music lovers in this country will be highly pleased with Tito Gobbi's renditions of these well-known Mozart arias. He has excellent support from the Philharmonia Orchestra and both selections have been splendidly recorded.

VOCAL

J. Strauss: Tausend und eine Nacht ("Thousand and One Nights") (complete operetta). (Sung in German). Herbert Ernst Groh, Adi Appelt, Edwin Heyer, Carlheinz Carell, Ilse Mentzel, Rosl Seegers, and Inge Tüxten with Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Otto Dobrindt. 2-12" discs in album (UR-URLP-203) \$11.90.

Interest in this recording is about equally divided between the historical and the musical. It is Strauss' first operetta (barring some later "arranging"), two previous attempts having been left incomplete. The reason for their unfinished state lay in Strauss' dislike for the libretti. Now the original book for which this music was written was not considered inspired, but in all events the work was completed and as *Indigo, oder die vierzig Räuber* it had an enthusiastic reception at Vienna on 10 February 1871. Greatly encouraged, Strauss went on to write the operettas that made him world famous. Some thirty years later, after Strauss' death, two "experienced" librettists, provided a new book, retitled the piece, calling it *1001 Nacht* and the music was "arranged" by Ernest Reiterer.

A very passable performance has been recorded here, the chief figure being Herbert Ernst Groh in the dual roles of Suleiman and Mossu. Herr Groh retains a surprising amount of the voice he had in 1934 when he replaced the late Josef Schmidt as leading tenor on the Berlin Radio. His style is exemplary and his general musicianship adds much to the success of the performance. Ilse Mentzel and Rosl Seegers are two excellent singers in this genre and have voices of the requisite lightness. Adi Appelt, in the humorous role of Addin, Suleiman's secretary, overbids on a few occasions and becomes a bit "cute" for American ears. The Radio Berlin Chorus and Orchestra under Otto Dobrindt turn in fine performances and the net result is enjoyable. The only question in this reviewer's mind is will the

tenth or twentieth playing sound as good as the first? The work has undeniable charm, but it lacks, one fears, the real musical value of a *Fledermaus* or a *Zigeunerbaron*.

The recording is good and a complete libretto (German-English) is provided. The review set was coupled side 1 and side 3—side 2 and side 4 instead of the usual drop sequence 1-4; 2-3. W.

Caldara: *Selve amiche, ombrose piante*. One side, and **Durante:** *Vergin, tutto amor preghiera*. (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Rainaldo Zamboni. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1896) \$1.32.

Scarlatti: *O cessate di piagarmi*. One side, and **Cesti:** *Intorno all' idol mio*. (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Rainaldo Zamboni. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1906) \$1.32.

Bassani: *Ah se tu dormi ancora* (recit.); *Posate, dormite* (aria). One side, and **Carissimi:** *Vittoria, vittoria!* (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Vito Carnevali. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1927) \$1.32.

Fasolo: *Cangia, cangia tue voglie*. One side, and **Scarlatti:** *Già il sole dal gange*. (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Vito Carnevali. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1934) \$1.32.

Giordani: *Caro mio ben*. One side, and **Monteverdi:** *Arianna—Lasciatemi morire*. (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Rainaldo Zamboni. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1955) \$1.32.

Bononcini: *Per la gloria d'adoravi*. One side, and **Handel:** *Atalanta—Care selve*. (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Vito Carnevali. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1956) \$1.32.

Gigli, who has always been interested in music of this character, has selected twelve Italian classic songs from the 17th and 18th centuries for this series of recordings. These discs were greeted with great enthusiasm in both Italy and England where they were released several months ago. In a letter to HMV upon their issuance in England, Mr. Gigli said: "Of the hundreds of records I have sung for your company in the 32 years of our association none has given me such pleasure as this series. I have heard and approved of each of the titles and can safely say that each in its way is a jewel and most singable. My benediction for the success that they merit."

We predict that discerning music lovers will find much to enjoy and admire on these discs which recently arrived from England.

Josephine Baker Sings. (Sung in French). Josephine Baker (vocal) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-10" disc (*C-FL-9532) \$3.

While ordinarily THE NEW RECORDS does not review items in the strictly popular vein, we occasionally bring to our readers' attention unusual items in this field which we think might interest them. Jo-

sephine Baker, an entertainer whose name is a byword in the night life of Europe, Africa and South America, has recently been making a tour of her native United States and has played to capacity houses. The success of her tour has given Columbia Records the incentive for releasing some of her earlier numbers for which she is noted. Although Miss Baker's voice is slight, the period evoked by her style of presentation, to say nothing of the orchestral backgrounds, will bring a wistful look to the eyes of those of us who remember the two decades before World War II. The selections include: *J'ai deux amours* (Two Loves Have I); *La Petite Tonkinoise*; *C'est lui!*; *Haiti*; *Pardon si je t'importune*; *Aux îles Hawai*; *Si j'étais blanche*; and *Sans amour*.

Ravel: Chansons Madécasses. (Sung in French). Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) with George Reeves (piano), John Wummer (flute), and Laszlo Vargo (violinocello). One side, and **Debussy:** (3) *Chansons de Bilitis*. (Sung in French). Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) with George Reeves (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2184) \$4.

Jennie Tourel's artistry is a never-failing source of pleasure to us. She sings with ease in at least four languages and brings a depth and understanding to the vocal art that is all too rare today. Debussy's *Chansons de Bilitis* are by no means new to discs—Maggie Teyte, Suzanne Danco and Madeleine Dubuis are among those who have rendered these impressionistic, fragile songs in which voice and piano are inseparable. We have always preferred Maggie Teyte for this work because of an other-world quality which is uniquely hers. However, we find Miss Tourel's warmer approach just as attractive. *Chansons Madécasses*, one of Ravel's strangely moving song cycles, is an exotic and interesting evocation of Madagascar which needs careful attention before judgment can be passed. Full translations of all the songs on this disc are printed on the cover.

Popular Concert. Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestras conducted by Andre Kostelanetz, Maurice Abravanel, and Pietro Cimara. 4-7" discs in box (øC-A-1006) \$5.10. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2181) \$4. Bishop: *Lo! Here the Gentle Lark*. (TNR Feb. '49).

Dell'Acqua: *Vilanelle*. (TNR Feb. '49).

Rachmaninoff: *Vocalise, Op. 34, No. 14*. (TNR Nov. '49).

Rimsky-Korsakov: *The Rose and the Nightingale*. (TNR Nov. '49).

Friml: *L'amour, toujours l'amour*. (TNR Oct. '45).

Scott: *Think on Me*. (TNR Nov. '45).

Kern: *Jockey on the Carrousel*. (TNR Oct. '45).

Bach-Gounod: *Ave Maria*. (TNR Nov. '45).

All the above selections have appeared on 78 r.p.m. discs in the past few years. The issue of THE NEW RECORDS in which each was reviewed is indicated after the selections. In collecting them all on one LP

disc, Columbia has made available a varied program of Miss Pons' most popular songs. As noted, they are now also obtainable in the 45 r.p.m. speed.

Falling in Love. Allan Jones (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1527) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-95) \$4.67.

One of the best musical comedy tenors sings a group of songs, most of which are about falling in love. The 45 r.p.m. set contains: *Falling in Love With Love*; *So in Love*; *I'm Falling in Love With Someone*; *On the Trail*; *Who Are You?*; and *Thine Alone*. The LP disc, in addition to those songs just listed, also includes *I Love You Truly* and *Deep in My Heart, Dear*.

Songs for Everyone. Leonard Warren (baritone) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frank Black. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1526) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-94) \$4.67.

One of our most popular baritones sings a group of songs that are calculated to suit the taste of practically everyone. They are: *America the Beautiful*; *Love's Old Sweet Song*; *Mother Machree*; *A Little Bit of Heaven*; *Home on the Range*; *On the Road to Mandalay*; *Ol' Man River*; and *Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

I Love You. Ezio Pinza (basso) with orchestra conducted by Johnny Green. 3-10" discs in album (V-DM-1524) \$4.50. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1524) \$3.99.

Ezio Pinza, described by the magazine *Time* as "the greatest singing-actor of his generation," has selected a group of songs with wide popular appeal for the present album. His vast host of fans will probably "eat them up." They are: *I Love Thee* (Grieg); *Dancing in the Dark*; *One Night of Love*; *With a Song in My Heart*; *Falling in Love With Love*; and *For You Alone*.

PIANO

"Meet the Composer." Francis Poulenc plays his own works. One side, and **Piano Music of Satie.** Francis Poulenc (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4399) \$5.45.

Poulenc: *Mouvements perpétuels*.

Nocturne in D.

Suite française.

Satie: *Descriptions automatiques*.

Gymnopédie No. 1.

Sarabande No. 2.

Gnossienne No. 3.

Avant-dernières pensées.

Croquis et agaceries d'un gros-bon homme en bois.

Although Francis Poulenc is a composer of great

accomplishment, he does more for the memory of Erik Satie in this disc, the second in the series, *Meet the Composer*, than he does to further his own renown. We do not know whether or not this was accomplished through a becoming modesty but, at any rate, we are grateful to him for an introduction to the music of a composer who never became great, but who influenced such outstanding men as Debussy and Ravel, to say nothing of the group known as *Les Six*. Satie's music has such a simple, straightforward quality that one critic remarked that it "was as devastating as the remarks of a child. . . . To the uninitiated (it sounds) trifling."

Poulenc's own compositions, not his most noteworthy, are pleasant and, at times, jaunty; we regret that some of his more serious works were not represented. However, we do have fine recordings elsewhere of his *Mass in G* (*V-LM-1088) and *Concerto in G minor for Organ, Strings, and Tympani* (*C-ML-4329). H.

Schubert: Fantasia in F minor, Op. 103. One side, and **Schubert: Rondo in D, Op. 138** and **Schubert: Rondo in A, Op. 107** and **Schubert: Marche Caractéristique in C, Op. 121, No. 1.** Paul Badura-Skoda and Joerg Demus (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5047) \$5.95.

Schubert: Fantasia in C, Op. 15 ("The Wanderer"). Clifford Curzon (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-83) \$4.95.

Schubert: Sonata No. 13 in C minor, Op. Posth. Webster Aitken (piano). 1-12" disc (*EMS-LP-110) \$5.95.

Schubert: Sonata in C ("Unfinished"). Ray Lev (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1072) \$5.95.

Lovers of Schubert's keyboard music will have a feast this month. Four new LP discs are available containing some seven selections. We wish that we had space to consider each one separately but since we are making every effort during these summer months to catch up on the vast number of recordings that await attention we can do little else but list them. We are hoping to be up-to-date by September so that the new fall releases may be reviewed in the month in which they are made available.

We have carefully played the four LP discs listed above and in our opinion both the performances and the reproduction are entirely satisfactory.

ORGAN

Organ Reveries. Virgil Fox (organ). 6-7" discs in box (øC-A-1008) \$7.40. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4401) \$5.45.

Virgil Fox appeared on a few records several years ago, but his success was not nearly what it should have been. Now on a new label, we presume his recordings will appear with more frequency, and we hope the material will be both worthy and

salable. The present release is unquestionably salable, and this may be the foundation which Columbia intends to lay first. Most organists would hardly consider the material worthy, but we will uphold Fox by claiming anything is worthwhile when done with taste and discrimination by a great artist. For his album of organ reveries, Fox has chosen music which is calm and placid and on the quiet side. There are a few exceptions for contrast, but nothing is brilliant or showy. The contents are: Brahms' *Waltz in A-flat and Cradle Song*; the *Prayer* from "Hansel and Gretel"; Boccherini's *Minuet*; *Songs My Mother Taught Me* (Dvorák); *My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice* from "Samson and Delilah"; *Calm as the Night* (Bohm); *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* (Bach); *Rou-lade* (Bingham); *War March of the Priests* (Mendelssohn); and Rubinstein's *Kamenoi-Ostrow*.

Bingham's *Rou-lade* is the only organ piece in the collection, all the rest being transcriptions of familiar music. Fox plays with commendable restraint, and the disc should find a wide market among those who like organ music but cannot fathom most of the deep stuff you usually hear. Everyone knows these numbers and everyone loves them, and they are played here with surpassing beauty.

The organ used is the one in Riverside Church, New York City, a notoriously bad instrument. There is a magnificent picture of the console on the record jacket cover, but don't let it fool you. The console was just installed this year, but it operates the old organ. The next step will probably be to replace the organ. For the music played, the organ is adequate and, of course, Fox makes the most of it. The reproduction is excellent.

Virgil Fox is the greatest organ virtuoso of our day, and can "sell" an organ recital like no other person in the business. We hope to hear more of him on Columbia records soon.

S.

VIOLIN

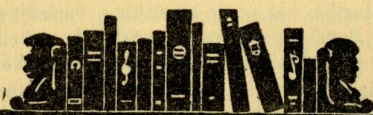


Schubert: (3) Sonatas, Op. 137. Mischa Mischakoff (violin) accompanied by Erno Balogh (piano). 1-12" disc (*LYRICHORD-LL-7) \$5.95.

Schubert's melodies, whether used in a simple song or in a more extended work like a string quartet or violin sonata, have an immediate appeal. There is a rolling freedom of motion—with contrasting stretches of tranquil beauty—in these Op. 137 *Sonatas* that will stand with much larger works from the same composer's hand.

Messrs. Mischakoff and Balogh give all their artistry to an integrated performance in which the piano, although the secondary instrument, complements the violin throughout.

The sonatas contained in Op. 137 are as follows: No. 1 in D; No. 2 in A minor and No. 3 in G minor.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, FEST—Festival, HS—Hady's Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PLM—Polymusic, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
g indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 7

SEPTEMBER, 1951

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

ABOUT ten years ago the first volume of these unique recordings (American Bird Songs. Vol. I. 6-10" discs. 78 rpm. Price \$8.93) was issued and through the years hundreds of copies were sold. Students of ornithology and nature lovers generally found it of inestimable value. The second volume (American Bird Songs. Vol. II) is now available. It contains 5-12" unbreakable 78 rpm discs in album. The price is \$11.03.

The recordings in the second volume were made on location by P. P. Kellogg and A. A. Allen for the Albert R. Brand Bird Song Foundation, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University. Fifty-one birds were recorded. The recordings of their songs were arranged in the following groups: Some Familiar Birds of Gardens and Shade Trees; Some Familiar Birds of the Roadside; Some Birds of the Lakes and Marshes; More Birds of the Marshes; and Some North American Warblers. A disc is devoted to each group.

As in the first volume, the birds were recorded in their natural haunts and the time and miles of travel necessary to obtain these unique recordings must have been tremendous. A sound truck was used for this work and the original recordings were made on 16 mm. film. The film was edited in the laboratory and transferred to a recording disc, at which time an announcer inserted the name of the bird, just before the call is heard, for easy identification. The whole is a fine piece of work and Cornell may be justly proud of the results.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10¢

each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Brigadoon. Original cast with Brigadoon chorus and orchestra—Allers. 1-12" disc (*V-LOC-1001) \$5.72. (TNR June '47).

A Patrice Munsel Program. Patrice Munsel with Guild Choristers and orchestra—Goodman. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-66) \$4.67. (TNR Oct. '47).

Jeanette MacDonald Favorites. Jeanette MacDonald with RCA-Victor Orchestra—Bennett. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-73) \$4.67. (TNR Nov. '50).

Stephen Foster Favorites. James Melton with RCA-Victor Chorus and Orchestra—Black. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-76) \$4.67. (TNR Nov. '50).

Violin Favorites. Nathan Milstein with RCA-Victor Orchestra—Fiedler. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-77) \$4.67. (TNR May '50).

Love Songs. Jan Peerce with orchestra—Bass. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-78) \$4.67. (TNR Sep. '50).

Great Religious Songs. James Melton with RCA-Victor Orchestra—Black. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-82) \$4.67. (TNR May '50).

Mischa Elman Favorites. Mischa Elman with Wolfgang Rosé (piano). 1-10" disc (*V-LM-83) \$4.67. (TNR Jan. '50).

Chopin Favorites. First Piano Quartet. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-84) \$4.67. (TNR Sep. '48).

Music to Remember (Music of Chopin). José Iturbi. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-87) \$4.67. (TNR Apr. '45).

Music of Ernesto Lecuona. First Piano Quartet. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-90) \$4.67. (TNR Aug. '48).

Songs You Love. Robert Merrill with orchestra—Case. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-92) \$4.67. (TNR Dec. '47).

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Op. 55* ("Eroica"). Boston Symphony Orchestra—Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1145) \$5.72 (TNR Dec. '47).

Tschaikovsky: *Overture "1812," Op. 49* and *Tschaikovsky: Capriccio Italien, Op. 45*. Boston Pops Orchestra—Fiedler. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1134) \$5.72. (TNR May '41).

Chopin Piano Music. Vladimir Horowitz. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1137) \$5.72. (TNR Mar. '46).

Mozart: *Concerto No. 27 in B-flat, K. 595*. Robert Casadesu with N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra—Barbirolli. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2186) \$4. (TNR July '41).

ORCHESTRA



Mozart: *Serenade No. 1 in D, K. 100*. One side, and Mozart: *Cassation No. 1 in G, K. 63*. Zimblér Sinfonietta. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8520) \$4.85.

Mozart: *Divertimento No. 17 in D, K. 334*. Members of the Vienna Octet. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-235) \$5.95.

Mozart: *Divertimento No. 7 in D, K. 205*. One side, and Mozart: *Cassation No. 2 in B-flat, K. 99*. Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Paul Walter. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-528) \$5.95.

For all intents and purposes, Serenades, Divertimentos, and Cassations are different names for the same thing. They are all suites (as we use the term today). Any lines of distinction between these terms are mighty fine lines and have never been fully agreed upon by the majority of musicians and experts. Therefore all of the selections on these three discs are of the same type of music. For the avid collector of Mozart this is just part of the enormous haul he is making every month in collecting what will shortly be the complete recorded (existing) works of Mozart, at the rate we are going at present. For most of us, the job of selecting a few of the most worth while, and best performed and reproduced, of the representative Mozart works is made increasingly difficult.

For anyone wishing the best of the present three we would select the Decca disc of the *Serenade No. 1* and the *Cassation No. 1*. For one thing, it features the best playing; and for another, the best reproduction; and for a third, super smooth surfaces. The Zimblér Sinfonietta, a conductorless group, is a marvelous gathering of fine musicians, and the grace and accuracy of their playing is noticeably superior to the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra under Paul Walter (we have heard the Salzburg Orchestra play better under other directors).

The *Divertimento No. 17* on the London disc is superbly played by the Vienna Octet. We feel that the smoothness of their playing did not need to be enhanced by overly smooth reproduction to the point

of sounding dull and boxy. This is not good London reproduction—part of the trouble is the extremely low level, for if the volume is turned up part of the trouble is eliminated, but we are still left with a bumpy bass quality.

None of these works is represented by any other LP recordings except the *Divertimento No. 17*, which has recently received a good performance by the Vienna Orchestra under Fekete (*ME-MG-10072). Some connoisseurs may prefer the octet performance on London; we would favor the Mercury disc. For those who are screening the vast Mozart output these days, we would suggest the Decca disc by the Zimblér Sinfonietta. S.

Grétry: *Céphale et Procris*—Ballet Suite. One side, and Dukas: *L'Apprenti sorcier* ("Sorcerer's Apprentice"). INR Symphony Orchestra (Brussels) conducted by Franz André. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8135) \$3.98.

Grétry's delightful music from *Céphale et Procris*, arranged as a ballet suite by Felix Mottl, has been a standard item on symphonic programs for many years. Recordings have not been plentiful, however, and this is the first one to appear in quite some time. It is gay, light-hearted music and indicates that Grétry's nickname—the "Molière of music"—is not unfounded. On looking through an encyclopedia of recorded music, we discovered quite a list of items under his name which, unfortunately, are not available. We hope some enterprising recording company will remedy this situation with a release of more of Grétry's music. Oversight, Franz André directs the INR Symphony Orchestra in yet another *Sorcerer's Apprentice*. The performance is good and if you do not have this item in your library, the fact that it is tied in with the Grétry work might make it a desirable addition to your collection.

Ibert: *Divertissement* and Ibert: *Capriccio*. Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One side, and Ibert: *Suite Elisabethaine*. Emmy Loose (soprano) with the Women's Choir of the Vienna Akademie Kammerchor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5061) \$5.95.

The gifted Jacques Ibert is represented on discs with some fresh material and a familiar favorite. The *Divertissement* has been given a deserved prominence on Boston Pops Programs by Arthur Fiedler, whose recording many have enjoyed for some years. This charming bit of fluff is now included on the present disc in a bright new recording. The performance is rather straight for this type of music, but then the music is so clever in itself it does not require too much assistance.

Preceding the *Divertissement* is the *Capriccio*, a continuous movement in several sections. It has plenty of rhythm and color, is skillfully put together and results in a pleasant little piece that is easy to listen to. Its dancing rhythms, gay melodies, tricky effects, and

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
 ♪ indicates 45 rpm.

general feeling of exhilaration will hold your attention. The performance has good drive.

Suite Elizabethaine is a neo-classical stylization of old dance forms. It was written as incidental music for a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The title underlines the Shakespearean reference. Of the nine movements, four are based on the melodies of Elizabethan composers; Ibert adheres to the harmony of the seventeenth century and uses characteristic ornamentation. In the other movements he injects a modern spirit. The vocal portions, where they occur, are strictly incidental. The suite is highly enjoyable and well worth being committed to discs. Swoboda does a first rate job with this music and the reproduction is very fine. This all-Ibert disc will afford some collectors a lot of pleasure. S.

Operatic Highlights for Orchestra (Vol. III). New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-296) \$5.95.

Puccini: *Manon Lescaut*—Overture.

Donizetti: *Don Pasquale*—Overture.

Catalani: *La Wally*—Prelude to Act III.

Verdi: *I Vespri Siciliani*—Overture.

Verdi: *Nabucco*—Overture.

Rossini: *L'Italiana in Algeri*—Overture.

A Promenade Concert. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-525) \$3.

Saint-Saëns: *Samson et Dalila*—Bacchanale.

Saint-Saëns: *Danse Macabre*.

Balakirev: *Islamey* (An Oriental Fantasy).

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Mlada*—Cortege des nobles.

Found at last! An LP disc containing six selections that are not duplicated (to our knowledge) in other collections of this sort. Alberto Erede and the New Symphony Orchestra, in the third of this series, present a fine selection of operatic overtures. They are played in best style and the reproduction is *ffrr* at its best. MGM, in its own quiet way, has been making some excellent LP discs with good, live tone and quality performance. George Weldon and the London Symphony Orchestra, in addition to such "pop" favorites as *Danse Macabre* and *Bacchanale*, give us two newcomers to LP. Reproduction is exceptional and the orchestra plays with keenness and verve.

Pergolesi: (4) Concerti for Orchestra. Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Angelo Ephrikian. 2-10" discs in album (*WEST-WL-4001/2) \$9.50.

Concerto No. 1 in G.

Concerto No. 3 in A.

Concerto No. 4 in F minor.

Concerto No. 5 in E-flat.

Giovanni Pergolesi, whose reputation rests mainly on his *Stabat Mater* and *La Serva Padrona*, had ac-

tually a host of compositions to his credit. He managed, in his extremely short life (he died at 26), to write over one hundred works which included operas, oratorios, cantatas, and instrumental music of many types. We are presented here with four out of a number of concerti attributed to Pergolesi. We say "attributed" because a dispute has been carried on over the years—rather like the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy in miniature—as to their authorship. However, we can only agree with the critic who said that no matter who created them "they are the same beautiful works, and just as worthy of performance."

The spontaneity in style, the expressive melodies, and the appealing format of these orchestral concerti make them a worthwhile addition to the libraries of those music lovers whose taste runs to chamber works of the early 18th century impeccably played and beautifully reproduced.

Brahms: Hungarian Dances (complete). Oklahoma City Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Alessandro. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-102) \$5.95.

This may not be the definitive version of Brahms' collection of *Hungarian Dances* but it's more than satisfactory to us now that our ears have become accustomed to *tempi* different from those usually connected with this music. At first, we thought that Maestro Alessandro was rushing his orchestra through some of the dances at breakneck speed. However, on repeated hearings we decided it was our ears, used to the customary dragging-out of the musical phrases and the superdramatic pauses injected by many conductors, that had deceived us. Only the most jaded palate could resist these charming, bouncy symphonic arrangements of authentic folk music heard by Brahms in his travels through Hungary. Originally, Brahms' collection of twenty-one dances was prepared for four-hand piano. He orchestrated only three of them at a later date; Anton Dvorák, Andreas Hallen, and Albert Parlow arranged the rest. However, it would be difficult to determine which composer was responsible for which dance; we enjoyed them all.

Telemann: Suite in A minor for Flute and Strings.

James Pappoutsakis (flute) with the Zimble String Sinfonietta. One side, and **Mozart: Serenade No. 6 in D, K. 239** ("Serenata Notturna"). Zimble String Sinfonietta. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8522) \$4.85.

Georg Philipp Telemann's *Suite for Flute and Strings* appears rarely on discs—William Kincaid's recording with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra is the only other one we know of, and that has been retired from the RCA Victor catalog. We are pleased that Decca has released an LP version in which the talents of James Pappoutsakis and the Zimble String Sinfonietta are combined. The few recordings we have heard in which the Zimble Sinfonietta has taken part serve, among other things, to convince us of the infinite good taste and fine musicianship of the organization and its founder, Josef Zimble. In both the Telemann *Suite* and its com-

panion, Mozart's *Serenata Notturna*, which supercedes all previous recordings, Decca has provided superior reproduction to match the faultless playing.

Strauss Waltzes (Vol. II). Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-12" discs in album (V-DM-1518) \$4.97. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1518) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-68) \$4.67.

On the Beautiful Blue Danube.

Der Zigeunerbaron—Treasure Waltz.

Tales from the Vienna Woods.

Mr. Fiedler and the Boston Pops Orchestra have added another volume to their Strauss collection and do it with their usual élan. We have but one criticism to make and this applies only to the LP version: the *Treasure Waltz* is split between the two sides of the disc for no apparent reason that we could discover, since there was ample room to continue this waltz to its conclusion without crowding. We take this splitting on 78 rpm and 45 rpm discs in our stride because it is unavoidable, but one of the chief advantages of the long-playing disc is its ability to present *uninterrupted* music.

Berlioz: La Damnation de Faust—Orchestral excerpts. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Overture Solennelle "1812," Op. 49.** Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8127) \$3.98.

This marks the first appearance on LP of orchestral selections from Berlioz' *Damnation of Faust*, in spite of the fact that the masters from which they and the 1812 *Overture* were taken are undoubtedly of pre-war vintage. The excerpts include *Menuet de Feux-Follets; Danse des Sylphes*; and the *Rákoczy March*. The same recording of the Tchaikovsky work has already appeared on LP, under the Mercury label (*ME-MG-15000), coupled with Richard Strauss' *Don Juan*. Capitol seems to have made a better job of the transfer although the age of the recordings does show. Mengelberg treats us to his usual hew-to-the-line reading of both scores and seems to have displayed little imagination in performance thereof.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G.** Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-226) \$4.95.

As there are already three LP versions of each of these two Bach pieces it would hardly seem necessary to have a fourth. However, the present disc is available and if your local dealer carries all four versions in stock you may make your choice. If he doesn't we suggest either the present disc or the Columbia one (*C-ML-4282) recorded by a chamber orchestra under the direction of Fritz Reiner. The other versions are by the Prades Festival Orchestra under Casals and the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra conducted by Klemperer.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Brahms: Sextet No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 18. Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet with Ferdinand Stangler (viola) and Guenther Weiss (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5063) \$5.95.

Brahms: Trio in A for Violin, 'Cello and Piano, Op. posth. William Huebner (violin), Richard Harand (violoncello), and Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5058) \$5.95.

Brahms: Quartet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1. One and one-half sides, and **Schubert: Quartet No. 12 in C minor ("Quartetsatz").** Amadeus String Quartet. 1-12" disc (WEST-WL-5084) \$5.95.

Brahms: Quartet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1. Budapest String Quartet. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2191) \$4.

Brahms: Trio in E-flat for Violin, Horn and Piano, Op. 40. George Alès (violin), Jean Devémy (French horn), and Annie d'Arco (piano). 1-10" disc (*ME-MG-15015) \$3.85.

This would appear to be a Brahms Chamber Music Festival. Considering the fact that Johannes Brahms was not a prolific composer, it is remarkable that his chamber works outnumber the symphonic writings and yet we hear them rarely. However, anyone equipped with a long-playing turntable and its accessories can have a musical feast. With so many discs under consideration, we can but mention them in passing and point out the most interesting.

First of all, with the exception of Schubert's *Quartetsatz* and Brahms' *Trio*, Op. 40, all the above selections are new to LP. We have listed the discs in order of preference, beginning with the most outstanding. The Brahms *Sextet* is almost symphonic in its scoring; the melodies are sonorous and sweeping, and the performance, together with the splendid recording, leave nothing to be desired—a definite "must" for Brahmsians. His *Trio*, Op. posth., is another outstanding Westminster disc and we rate it second only because we prefer the grandeur of the *Sextet*; otherwise, in recording and performance, it is equal to the first. It abounds in rippling piano passages and lilting string sections, with poetic, moody interpolations now and again featuring one or another of the instruments. *Quartet No. 1* is represented on two discs and, by virtue of a more spacious recording, again we prefer the Westminster offering. In addition, it also gives us a fine performance of the Schubert *Quartetsatz*. The Budapest version of the *Quartet* is beautifully played but loses out in its rather dead recording. As for the *Horn Trio*, Op. 40, we find it one of the least interesting of Brahms' works. Even so, it is a better performance that Mercury gives us if one compares it with the recording previously issued by Renaissance (*X-13). H.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

Boccherini: Quintet No. 1 in D for Guitar and Strings.

Rey de la Torre (guitar) with the Stuyvesant String Quartet. One side, and Malipiero: *Rispetti e Strambotti*. Stuyvesant String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*PHILHARMONIA-PH-101) \$5.95.

Boccherini: Sextet in E-flat for Strings, Op. 24, No. 1.

One side, and Boccherini: *Sinfonia Concertante in G* and Boccherini: *Sextet in E-flat for Strings, Op. 41*. London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5077) \$5.95.

After 150 years, Boccherini is coming into his own. Thanks to LP, there are almost a score of his works now available on records. Not all of them, to be sure, are of the same caliber; but that is true of any composer. The *Quintet in D* might be dismissed as a novelty by chamber-music enthusiasts when they see the words "for guitar and strings." However, they need only listen to this work, with its abundance of melody and opulent scoring, to realize that the guitar is ideally suited to this form of musical composition. Then too, they might wonder why more composers were not drawn to this step-child of the instrument family. However, with artists like Rey de la Torre, Andres Segovia, and Vicente Gomez to sponsor it, the guitar is here to stay.

A present-day countryman of Boccherini's, Gian Francesco Malipiero, provides the companion piece for the *Quintet*. *Rispetti e Strambotti*, drawing its inspiration from the old Italian poetry forms bearing those names, is an arresting work for string quartet, which, in spite of its modernity, conveys a pastoral feeling throughout most of its course except where it suddenly bursts into striking folk rhythms. Here is a composition that requires careful listening; it will not appeal to anyone repelled by the word "modern."

The London Baroque Ensemble offers a Boccherini concert. They play two sextets and a *sinfonia concertante* and thus provide an interesting and varied program. One of the sextets is scored for strings (Op. 24, No. 1) and the other (Op. 41) includes three wind instruments; the *Sinfonia*, the most animated of the works on this disc, is played by five string and three wind instruments but is so brilliantly scored one might think there were double the number of players. A splendid disc for starting your Boccherini collection. H.

Bartók: Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano. Isaac Stern (violin) and Alexander Zakin (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4376) \$5.45.

Since Bartók's death in 1945, there has been a seemingly rapidly growing interest in his music. However, we are of the opinion that many more music lovers are talking about it than are actually appreciating it and enjoying it—it is much easier to discuss it than fully to understand it—it does not come easy to the uninitiated ear. In no sense do we mean that Bartók was not a great musician; and it may very well

be that his music will live through the ages as discerning music lovers learn to know it through careful and repeated hearings. The many Bartók recordings that have been made available in the last few years make this easily possible.

However, we do not believe that the disc which we are presently considering will enjoy a very large sale. Menuhin, who is a recognized interpreter of Bartók's music, with Adolph Baller at the piano, made a highly regarded recording of the *Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano* for RCA Victor (*V-LM-1009) about two years ago and we feel very sure that most persons interested in this work already have purchased the Menuhin-Baller version. Certainly no one would want two recordings of it.

Telemann: Quartet in D minor (Tafelmusik 1733 II, No. 2). One side, and **Telemann: Trio in E minor (Tafelmusik 1733 II, No. 4)** and **Loeillet: Trio Sonata in B minor.** Milton Wittgenstein, Thomas Wilt, Samuel Baron (flutes); Engelbert Brenner (oboe); Marcel Hubert (violincello); Sylvia Marlowe (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5076) \$5.95.**Telemann: Sonata in A minor and Telemann: Sonata in G minor.** One side, and **Tartini: Sonata in B-flat** and **Mattheson: Sonata in E minor.** Louis Kaufman (violin) and Antoine Geoffroy-Dechaume (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-8) \$5.95.**Tartini: Sonata in G minor and Tartini: Sonata in A.** One side, and **Corelli: Sonata in D, Op. 5, No. 1** and **Corelli: Sonata in E minor, Op. 5, No. 2.** Fredell Lack (violin) and Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-94) \$5.45.**Corelli: Sonata in C, Op. 5, No. 3 and Corelli: Sonata in A, Op. 5, No. 6.** One side, and **Corelli: Sonata in F, Op. 5, No. 10 (Suite No. 4)** and **Corelli: Sonata in D minor, Op. 5, No. 12 (Variations on "La Follia").** Robert Brink (violin) and Daniel Pinkham (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-109) \$5.45.

The composers represented in the above discs were contemporaries in a period when musical composition, especially for small chamber groups, flourished. No more than names to many present-day music lovers, these men were leading musicians and composers in what is now loosely called "the Baroque period." They also represent the three countries which led the musical world of that day: France, Germany and Italy.

With this information in mind, one might suppose that the compositions played on the four discs under discussion here would display a uniformity verging on the monotonous. To this reviewer, at least, there was no evidence of sameness although fifteen such compositions, written for virtually the same instrumental grouping in most instances, would tend to pall on the listener when heard in one session. Nevertheless, it is pleasant music, played with feel-

ing by all the artists concerned, and splendidly recorded. We would recommend particularly the Telemann-Loeillet disc to those of our readers who want to add music of this period to their libraries.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G. London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 152** ("Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn"). (Sung in German). Dorothy Bond (soprano) and Robert Irwin (baritone) with the London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5067) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under VOCAL.

CONCERTO



Mozart: Concerto No. 14 in E-flat, K. 449. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 22 in E-flat, K. 482.** Paul Badura-Skoda (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-22) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 17 in G, K. 453. Ralph Kirkpatrick (piano) with the Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra conducted by Alexander Schneider. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in D, K. 218.** Alexander Schneider (violin) with the Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra conducted by Alexander Schneider. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-1040) \$5.95.

With the enormous quantity of LP discs being issued, there are bound to be some slipshod jobs, and the Oceanic disc is one of them. We got no further than the introduction of the *Concerto No. 22* when we black-balled this one. Such playing as we hear in the final phrases of the introduction is incredible coming from the Vienna Symphony, unforgivable for being passed by conducted Sternberg, and not acceptable on permanent recordings.

After this clinker has been passed, the piano playing is of a high order, for Badura-Skoda plays with style, technical assurance and a good Mozartean sense. The *Concerto No. 22* is an important one and unusually long for Mozart. In fact, the last movement is carried over to the second record side; the break occurs at a good spot. Considering its beauty and appeal, it is surprising *No. 22* is appearing on LP for the first time. Anyone who likes Beethoven piano concertos but has never been drawn to Mozart concertos would do well to hear this one carefully. *Concerto No. 14* also makes its bow on LP, with a performance of general excellence (the orchestra gets through the introduction very nicely this time). The outstanding portion of this concerto is the last movement which is carried off very well by the artists. In the end movements of both concertos the cadenzas used are by Badura-Skoda, and we thought them to be very good, further demonstrating this man's talent.

The Haydn Society disc is an example of superb reproduction, to our way of thinking. The works were recorded in Columbia's New York City studios early

this year using a small chamber orchestra which is balanced with the solo instrument most effectively. The degree of hall resonance used is ideal. Kirkpatrick's Mozart is good, correct, and stylish to a degree, but a bit stilted and formal for our taste. It is possibly too elegant; you may like it that way rather than if it leaned in the opposite direction. We would be inclined to choose the Gaby Casadesus recording on Vox, although the coupling and the reproduction are swaying factors on the present disc. Schneider's fiddling of Mozart is definitely wooden in our opinion—there are some good moments, but most of it is too four-square. The other available disk by Heifetz is even more offensive in the other direction, being a lot of slick playing out of keeping with the music. Schneider and Kirkpatrick have good intentions, at least. The present disc does not just happen to find them in the same capital form as for the Mozart Violin and Piano Sonatas which they recorded for Columbia a few years ago. S.

Vivaldi: Concerto No. 1 in C minor for Two Violins, Harpsichord and Strings and **Vivaldi: Concerto No. 2 in G minor for Violin, Harpsichord and Strings.** Litschauer Chamber Orchestra of Vienna conducted by Angelo Ephrekian. One side, and **Vivaldi: Concerto No. 3 in C minor for Violin, Harpsichord and Strings** ("Il Sospeto") and **Vivaldi: Concerto No. 4 in G minor for Violin, Harpsichord and Strings** ("Dresden") and **Vivaldi: Concerto No. 5 in E for Violin, Harpsichord and Strings.** Pro Musica Orchestra of Paris conducted by Arthur Goldschmidt. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-514) \$5.95.

Vivaldi: Concerto in E minor for Violoncello and Strings and **Vivaldi: Concerto in A minor for Two Violins and Strings.** One side, and **Vivaldi: Concerto in D for Viola d'Amore, Cembalo and Strings** and **Vivaldi: Concerto in A for Cembalo and Strings.** Collegium Musicum Italicum di Roma conducted by Renato Fasano. 1-12" disc (*CE-50045) \$5.95.

It is strange to note that in Vivaldi's day, he was more famous than his contemporary, Bach. His works were carefully studied by music students and composers and were considered models of perfection. Bach acknowledged his debt to the Venetian musician, and it is chiefly through Bach's transcriptions of some of Vivaldi's works that interest in them was maintained over the years. Not until recently has there been any organized attempt to restore Vivaldi to his proper stature in the world of music. Among the organizations devoting themselves to this task is the Collegium Musicum Italicum whose instrumentalists are heard on one of the discs under consideration.

We found it difficult to choose the better of the two discs listed above: the Period disc makes use of the harpsichord throughout while the Cetra record substitutes the piano; the Cetra strings are not as "edgy" as those on Period; the Cetra selections are

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

more varied. All in all, we would take the Cetra disc but only by narrow margin. Both releases are expertly played.

Haydn: Concerto in E-flat for Trumpet and Orchestra.

Helmut Wobitsch (trumpet) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Anton Heiller. One side, and **Haydn: Concerto in D for Horn and Orchestra.** Franz Koch (horn) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anton Heiller. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-1038) \$5.95.

Haydn: Concerto in D for Horn and Orchestra. Alfred Brain (horn) with members of the Janssen Symphony Orchestra conducted by Werner Janssen. One side, and **Handel: Concerto Grosso in B-flat, and Handel: Alexanderfest Concerto in C.** Members of the Janssen Symphony Orchestra conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8137) \$4.98.

Since the advent of LP recording, Haydn has been the most popular composer. Led by the Haydn Society, every month more and more recordings of Haydn's music are made available. Handel has not been neglected either, as a glance at the current LP catalog will show.

The pair of discs listed above contain two Haydn items and two by Handel. Unfortunately the Haydn *Concerto in D for Horn and Orchestra* appears on each disc. We have compared the recordings and we rather prefer the one by Koch and the Vienna Symphony—it would seem to us that that version is more in the spirit of Haydn's time—it abounds in the atmosphere of the 18th century. However, the music with which this selection is coupled may well be the deciding factor. Better listen to these records before you make your choice.

CHORAL



Handel: Israel in Egypt. Soloists, Choir and Orchestra of the Handel Society of England conducted by Walter Goehr. 2-12" discs in folder (*HANDEL SOCIETY-HDL-1) \$11.90.

Handel: Acis and Galatea. Soloists, Choir and Orchestra of the Handel Society of England conducted by Walter Goehr. 3-12" discs in album (*HANDEL SOCIETY-HDL-2) \$18.85.

Israel in Egypt, usually ranked second only to *Messiah* among Handel's works, has been chosen by the newly formed Handel Society for its inaugural release. It is a tremendous work, impressive beyond words and justly described by Herbert Weinstock as an "epic on a vast, non-human universal scale." The performance is good, in strict Handelian style and proportion (a chorus of 50 and an orchestra of 26) so that the effects are achieved by the music and not through overpowering sound, as is so often the case. The chorus, incidentally, is the real star of the performance, there being no less than twenty-three choral numbers, eighteen of which are written for double chorus. The soloists are all adequate and Marjorie

Thomas is outstanding; she sings the air *Their land brought forth frogs* in flawless style. Walter Goehr's direction is thoughtful and conscientious, the orchestra plays with spirit and responsiveness, and the chorus sings with precision and animation.

The second issue by the Society is the "opera" *Acis and Galatea*. This work, which was Handel's answer to the failure of Italian Opera in England, is variously referred to as an oratorio, masque, *serenata* or pastoral cantata. It is designed for concert performance and thus loses nothing in recorded performance, as the notes astutely put it, for the lack of action, scenery and costumes will not be missed. This recording is presumably of the third and final setting made of the *Galatea* story by Handel. The music has all the baroque charm one expects and is delightfully sung by Margaret Ritchie, Richard Lewis, William Herbert and Trevor Anthony. The last-named, as Polyphemus, sings the famous *I rage, I melt, I burn!* in splendid and sonorous fashion. Miss Ritchie unleashes a noteworthy trill in her air *Hush ye, pretty, warbling choir*. The diction of the principals is a model many other singers could profitably emulate. The orchestra is superb and Walter Goehr keeps the whole production moving along in sprightly fashion.

Both sets are admirably recorded but *Acis and Galatea* is the better of the two. Texts for both works are included along with informative notes by Richard Strunsky.

W.

Music of Palestrina. Period Choral Society directed by Robert Strassburg. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-513) \$5.95.

Magnificat in the Fourth Mode.

Missa "Sacerdotes Domini"—Pleni sunt coeli.

Missa "O Rex Glorae"—Crucifixus.

Missa "Descendit Angelus Domini"—Benedictus.

(2) Hymns.

Adoramus Te Christe.

Confitemini Domini.

Salve Regina.

Hodie Christus Natus Est.

The music of Palestrina, along with that of many of the other older composers, is of absorbing interest to many music lovers, and is consequently receiving considerable attention from the smaller recording companies. The present disc is designed as an introduction to this Italian Master's voluminous output and, as such, is most welcome.

The principal work is a *Magnificat in the 4th Mode*, one of thirty-five such settings made by Palestrina and the text is taken from the famous passage to be found in the 1st Chapter of Luke, the 46th to the 55th verses. Three representative excerpts from Masses follow, none of which have been previously recorded, which fact is scarcely surprising when one considers there are ninety-four extant Masses by Palestrina. The program continues with two Hymns, a morning hymn *Jesu Rex admirabilis* and *Tua Jesu dilecti* and closes with four Motets, including the well known and sur-

passingly beautiful *Adoremus Te, Jesu Christe* and a relatively unfamiliar, but exquisite, Christmas Motet *Hodie Christus Natus Est*.

The Period Choral Society under Robert Strassburg, Period's *maestro da casa*, has obviously been well rehearsed, with immense benefit to the music. Their attack, purity of tone and feeling for the music are of a high order. In addition the loving care that has been expended in its preparation is very definitely above average. Such music and musicianship deserve a wide hearing. The recording is fine and complete texts and notes have been included. W.

VOCAL



Songs of Scandinavia. (Sung in Finnish, Norwegian and German). Tii Niemela (soprano) accompanied by Pentti Koskimies (piano). 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-5) \$5.95.

On one of the outstanding LP discs to date, WCFM releases a group of Scandinavian songs that, for musical interest and sheer beauty, would be difficult to equal, let alone surpass. The first side is devoted to two groups of songs by the contemporary Finnish composer Yrjö Kilpinen (1892-). Collectors of long standing may remember an album, recorded in London, under the auspices of the Kilpinen Society, featuring Gerhard Hüsch as soloist with the composer's wife as accompanist. None of the songs recorded here are duplications of those included in that memorable set. The present record opens with the *Fjældlieder* or to give it its Finnish title, *Tunturilauluja*, which opus consists of six magnificent *lieder*. They are identified as *Laponian Mountain Songs* in English, and must be ranked with the finest songs of all time. They are doubly interesting because they are sung in Finnish. The second Kilpinen item is the *Lieder der Liebe I*, five songs set to German texts by Christian Morgenstern, and sung in that language.

The obverse side contains eight songs, four by Sibelius and an equal number by Edvard Grieg. They are sung variously in German, Swedish, Finnish and Norwegian but always in the original text. Of the Sibelius songs, only one, *Im Feld ein Mädchen singt*, has been recorded before. The others, all extremely beautiful are: *Varen flyktar hastigt; Illalle*; and *Var det en drom?* The Grieg songs, as might be expected, are the weakest musically, but are enchantingly sung. The familiar *En Svane* is included but the others, *Med en Vandlilje*; *Modersorg*; and *Tak for did raad* are new to records.

Mme. Tii Niemala, a young multi-lingual Finnish soprano makes her American record debut with this disc and it is a tremendously impressive one. She is a highly accomplished artist and makes all her effects in the simplest way and with perfect judgment. In addition she has a fine ear and delicate rhythmic faculty. Her command of every form of expression is very remarkable, and her tones are pure and sweet.

She is accompanied by her husband, Pentti Koskimies, who matches her in artistry.

The texts and notes as supplied by Dr. Wm. B. Ober are of high quality, as is the recording. All in all it is a magnificently distinguished record. W.

Mahler: Kindertotenlieder. (Sung in German). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2187) \$4.

Mahler: Kindertotenlieder. (Sung in German). Lorri Lail (mezzo-soprano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Rolf Kleinert. One side, and **Mahler: Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen.** (Sung in German). Josef Metternich (baritone) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Leopold Ludwig. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7016) \$5.95.

The *Kindertotenlieder* (*Songs on the Death of Children*) were written in 1902 to poems by Friedrich Rückert. It is unusual and at the same time a great tribute to Mahler's peculiar genius that he could take such extremely personal poems as these (Rückert wrote them on the death of his small daughter) and write a convincing orchestral accompaniment. One would ordinarily assume that for such texts a piano would be more appropriate—but such is Mahler's ability with the orchestra that one accepts the innovation without reservation.

The two versions appearing this month have much to recommend them. The Ferrier-Walter performance will probably be preferred, due to Bruno Walter's close association with the composer. Certainly his conducting of Mahler's works has long been an outstanding feature of our concert life and has provided gems in the recorded repertoire. Miss Ferrier has never sounded better. She acquits herself with good sense and feeling; her large contralto is projected perfectly, and throughout the entire cycle one gets the impression that she obviously knows what she is about. The Urania disc is equally fine. Miss Lail exhibits a good voice and considerable skill in using it. It is a mezzo rather than a contralto and consequently is smaller and less dark than Miss Ferrier's. Her musical endowment and style are those of an extremely able artist.

There is little choice as far as interpretation is concerned, this reviewer preferring the Urania disc because of Miss Lail, and also because of the fine recording of Mahler's early (1883) song-cycle *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* ("Songs of a Wayfarer") in a beautiful performance by Josef Metternich on the other side. Herr Metternich sings the melancholy music with appropriate sentiment and is admirable throughout. He has a robust baritone that is capable of a wide range of expression. Good diction and excellent taste are further attributes. The conducting of Rolf Kleinert for Miss Lail and Leopold Ludwig for Metternich is at once understanding and persuasive.

The recording is equally good in each case, so the choice revolves around which soloist or conductor one

prefers. The Urania disc is a better buy financially, but in any event the choice is difficult unless one jumps between the horns of the dilemma and buys both. W.

Falla: (7) Canciones Populares Españoles. One side, and **Songs of Miguel Sandoval.** (Sung in Spanish). Lydia de Ibarrando (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Miguel Sandoval (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2189) \$4.

Bartók: (5) Songs, Op. 16. One side, and **Bartók: (8) Hungarian Folk Songs.** (Sung in Hungarian). Nina Valery (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Rudolph Goehr (piano). 1-10" disc (*AL-AL-106) \$4.45.

Exotic is the word for these two discs. The first features a fine Spanish soprano, new to records, Lydia de Ibarrando. She sings the ever welcome *Seven Popular Spanish Songs* by Manuel de Falla and, even more interesting, a group of songs by Miguel Sandoval. These latter songs are colorful, really good music abounding in typical Spanish rhythms. The titles are self-explanatory—*Copla Bailable* (Dancing Song), *El Mercado de los Esclavos* (The Slave Market) and *Soleá* (Processional) among others. Miss Ibarrando has a light mezzo-soprano, very pure and even throughout its considerable range. In addition, it is full of fire and color, backed up by a personality and imagination that are exciting. Both sets of songs are impeccably sung, the Falla standing comparison with the older Supervia recording very well indeed—but the Sandoval music steals the show.

Equally foreign and strange are the *Five Songs* comprising Bartók's Op. 16. The soloist, Nina Valery, first presented the music in Paris shortly before World War II; since she studied and prepared the work with the composer her interpretation may be considered authentic. The music reflects Bartók's search for, and experimentation with, a new idiom. Outstanding in the group are *Autumn Sounds* and *Alone with the Sea*. The other side is devoted to a first recording of 8 *Hungarian Folk Songs* as arranged by Bartók. Perhaps it would be best to let the arranger speak about this highly national and, at the same time, personal idiom "... Its expressive power is amazing ... void of sentimentality ... although to handle folk tunes is one of the most difficult tasks ..." The "difficult task" has been accomplished with distinction and makes possible a musical experience far out of the ordinary. Mme. Valery's mezzo-soprano is equal to all the demands placed on it.

The recording of both discs is very good and they are unreservedly recommended for those interested in music off the beaten path, although the Ibarrando record can be enjoyed by the veriest tyro. W.

Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde. Elsa Cavelti (mezzo-soprano) and Anton Dermota (tenor) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7000) \$5.95.

Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, or as he referred

to it, the "Symphony of Songs," was written during the summer of 1908. The text is drawn from verses written by an 8th Century Chinese poet, translated into German by Hans Bethge. There are six songs divided equally between the two soloists. Mahler did not live to hear the work performed, for it was not until 20 November 1911 that Bruno Walter, his friend and disciple presented the work for the first time in Munich, and Mahler had been dead a little over six months.

The present performance is a beautiful one and ranks with the older version (recorded in 1936 in Vienna, at an actual performance) by Bruno Walter with Charles Kullman and Kerstin Thorborg. Anton Dermota, the tenor soloist, is a vigorous and intelligent singer. His obvious sympathy for the music is apparent in every bar he sings and his vocal style is excellent. These amiable characteristics are especially notable in the charming *Von der Jugend*. Elsa Cavelti is also a soloist of top rank. She displays a warm, vibrant mezzo, smooth and even throughout its range. In addition, and of equal importance, she too is sympathetic and yields readily to musical inspiration. Of the three *lieder*, she sings at her most engaging in *Von der Schönheit*. Otto Klemperer is a conductor of great stature (physically as well as musically!) and his reading of Mahler's complex score is an inspired and enjoyable one. As one might expect, it differs from Bruno Walter's, but the differences are genuine; that is, they are the result of varying temperaments and experiences and are not mere virtuoso tamperings.

Vox has recorded the work in exemplary fashion, the technical job being outstanding. Nor have they stinted as regards packaging—readable notes have been furnished as well as a complete German-English text. An LP version of this work was quite a while coming but it has been well worth waiting for.

W.

Fain: Flahooley. Yma Sumac, Barbara Cook, Jerome Courtland, Irwin Corey with supporting vocalists, chorus and orchestra conducted by Maurice Levine. 6-10" discs in album (CL-DF-284) \$7.09. 4-7" discs in box (CL-EDM-284) \$5.78. 1-12" disc (*CL-S-284) \$5.72.

After the phenomenal success of Yma Sumac's "Voice of the Xtabay" (*CL-H-244), it was inevitable that her amazing talent would be put into some theatrical enterprise. "Flahooley"—a musical comedy of people and puppets—officially introduced Miss Sumac to theater-goers this spring. The musical, which has closed for the summer, is an amusing blend of satire and fantasy (calling to mind "Finian's Rainbow") and deals with the attempt to market a new kind of toy—"Flahooley," the doll that laughs. High-pressure sales methods, mass-production and other manifestations of the machine age are gently spoofed in words and music. There is, to be sure, love-interest—as typified by such songs as *Here's to Your Illusions* and *He's Only Wonderful*—and three songs by the exotic Yma Sumac. These latter were written especially for her by Moises Vivanco, who, in addi-

tion to being her husband, was responsible for the unusual collection on the "Xtabay" disc. It is not necessary to have seen the show to enjoy "Fla-hooley" on records, for Capitol has made an intelligible and lively condensation of the entire production.

A Lieder Recital. (Sung in German). Tiana Lemnitz (soprano) accompanied by Michael Raucheisen (piano). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7013) \$5.95.

Mme. Lemnitz' choice of material for this "recital" is so esoteric that one has doubts as to its musical merit. Oddly enough, the doubts are realized only in the Schubert, especially in the first song *Viola*. This song, if one can call it such, runs on for about fifteen minutes and is an example of the verbosity and lack of critical taste that occasionally beset Schubert. Mme. Lemnitz sticks with it gamely but, in the end, is defeated. The two other Schubert songs are of more moderate length, but are not of great interest. Of the two, *Der Blumensprache* and *Die blumen Schmerz*, the latter is of academic interest because Schubert used the melody in the variations movement of his great Opus 159 *Fantasia*, for violin and piano.

The five little songs by Peter Cornelius (1824-1874) are very welcome. Time has not dealt too gently with the author of *Der Barbier von Bagdad*, and it is as a composer of *lieder*, rather than as the ardent disciple of Wagner, that he did his most characteristic work. Tiana Lemnitz projects all the songs with her accustomed finesse and aplomb. They are romantic in nature, being concerned with forests, moonlight and other of the manifestations dear to all 19th century artists. The recital closes with three songs by Hugo Wolf: *Der Knabe und das Immelein*; *Wiegenlied* and *Citronenfalter im April*.

Mme. Lemnitz has ample voice left for *lieder* singing and her artistry, as always, is above reproach. The accompaniments, as supplied by Michael Raucheisen, are superlatively played. The recording is generally excellent, with an exception taken for the piano tone—it varies from fair to poor. W.

Kern: Show Boat. Kathryn Grayson, Ava Gardner, Howard Keel, William Warfield with supporting vocalists, chorus and orchestra conducted by Adolph Deutsch. 4-10" discs in album (MGM-84) \$4.35. 4-7" discs in box (øMGM-K-84) \$3.91. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-559) \$3.

"Show Boat," of all Jérôme Kern's musicals, seems to be the one most likely to join the immortals. Since its first presentation in 1927, it has been performed all over the world and there has probably always been a production "on the boards" somewhere in the world through the past twenty-five years. The motion pictures have also added to its popularity—the most recent production being that of MGM Studios. This film version is currently showing in the larger cities and will undoubtedly win new friends for one of the most beloved musicals of our day. The disc under consideration is recorded from the sound track of the new film and includes: *Make Believe*; *Bill*; *Life upon*

the Wicked Stage; *You Are Love*; *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man*; *I Might Fall Back on You*; *Why do I Love You*; *Ol' Man River*. The recording is excellent and the vocalists sing with less "grand opera" style than is usually accorded this music. We appreciate this fact above all else.

Songs of Oley Speaks. Margaret Speaks (soprano) and Richard Bonelli (baritone) with the MGM Orchestra conducted by Macklin Marrow. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-550) \$3.

Now and again one of Oley Speaks' songs makes its way onto a record; usually, it's either *Sylvia* or *On the Road to Mandalay*. MGM, in releasing this disc, brings together eight of his songs for the first time and, in addition, presents his niece, Margaret Speaks as soloist. Richard Bonelli, well-known baritone of whom little has been heard in recent years, shares honors with Miss Speaks and sings as his portion of the recital *Star Eyes*; *The Prayer Perfect*; *The Lane to Ballybree*; and a rousing *On the Road to Mandalay*. Margaret Speaks sings *Morning*; *The Hills of Kerry*; *Sylvia*; and *Little House o' Dreams*. Both vocalists present the songs to advantage and the orchestral accompaniment is properly balanced.

Bach: Cantata No. 152 ("Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn"). (Sung in German). Dorothy Bond (soprano) and Robert Irwin (baritone) with the London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G.** London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5067) \$5.95.

The feature of the two recordings on this disc is the fact that the instruments used (recorder, viola d'amore and harpsichord) are the ones used in Bach's time. It was for these instruments that this music was written. As one listens to these pieces he can rightly feel that he is hearing Bach's music as the composer himself heard it over two centuries ago. In the last couple of decades there has been a definite movement to turn from the "symphonic" productions of Bach toward the simple conception of the composer. There is a delightful charm to the renditions as conceived and directed by Dr. Karl Haas, one of the leaders in this movement. We thoroughly enjoyed the present disc and we urge discerning music lovers to give it their attention.

OPERA

Verdi: I Lombardi alla Prima Crociata (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Maria Vitale, Renata Broilo (sopranos); Miriam Pirazzini (mezzo-soprano); Aldo Bertocci, Bruno Franchi, Gustavo Gallo (tenors); Mario Petri (bass-baritone); Mario Grosini, Renato Pasquali (bassos); with EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Manno Wolf-Ferrari. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1217) \$17.85.

I Lombardi alla Prima Crociata (The Lombards at the First Crusade) was produced at La Scala eleven

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

months after *Nabucco* and was a great popular success if not a critical one. A short time later Verdi went to Venice to supervise its production there and, after the performance, wrote the typically laconic note: "*I Lombardi* was a complete fiasco—what may be called a really classical fiasco . . . this is the plain and simple truth which I retell with neither pleasure nor grief." The Venetian reception was duplicated elsewhere and *I Lombardi* is seldom heard outside Italy. Like *Nabucco* it has never been given at the Metropolitan and consequently will, in most cases, be new to American listeners.

For the first time Cetra is guilty of poor casting. This, and not the music, is the set's fatal blemish. A group of singers such as supplied for *Nabucco* or *Il Matrimonio Segreto* would have carried the work, but, with one exception, the cast here is composed of mediocre voices. The two tenors, Aldo Bertocci as Arvino and Gustavo Gallo as Oronte are throaty and given to mannerisms, the most annoying of which is the excessive introduction of aspirates. Viclinda, in the person of Miriam Pirazzini, is shrill and unmusical and Maria Vitale as Giselda is only slightly better. The one excellent singer is Mario Petrie, a really fine bass-baritone, who dominates the performance as Pagano. His projection of the dark contours of the recitative and *adagio* of the hermit's *scena* (*E ancor silenzio*) provides one of the most interesting and artistic portions of the opera.

A large share of the blame can be laid at the door of Manno Wolf-Ferrari whose direction is uninspired and pedestrian. This is a pity, for it is unlikely that any other company will record this extravagant medley of time and place, love and religion, Crusaders and Moslems, Jerusalem and Milan put together by the librettist Solera and set to music by the young Verdi. And, despite the shoddy singing and performance there is much music here that is worth hearing. The recording is fair, being neither very good nor very bad. W.

Gounod: Faust (complete). (Sung in French). Eleanor Steber, Thelma Votipka (sopranos); Margaret Roggero (mezzo-soprano); Eugene Conley (tenor); Frank Guarrera (baritone); Cesare Siepi, Lawrence Davidson (bassos); with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Fausto Cleva. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-112) \$18.15.

It has been the fashion, for many years, to run down Gounod's ever-popular *Faust*—some do it on the basis that it does violence to Goethe's original (it was never intended to compete with that tremendous work), others claim the music to be trite, saccharine and so forth. Some of the reasons for such claims can be substantiated by the performance currently presented by Columbia.

The cast, on the surface, looks like a strong one; Steber, Conley, Guarrera and Siepi—but all, with the possible exception of Siepi are either not in good voice or, what is worse, just plain do not care. Miss

Steber is a woefully inadequate Marguerite. When she sings in the manner of a light soprano and so steadies her voice she is acceptable but when she becomes "dramatic", as she frequently does, all semblance of charm vanishes. Her Marguerite is never tragic—only emotional. Mr. Conley is a disappointment as Faust. His singing is what Bernard Shaw once described as a tasty sort of yelling. His French, incidentally, like that of all the other principals, is execrable. Guarrera also disappoints as Marguerite's brother. He pushes for his top notes in an ominous fashion and fails to realize any of the character of Valentine. Cesare Siepi is vocally resplendent but dramatically wooden. Perhaps the chief fault lies with Fausto Cleva, the director. He rides rough-shod over the score, ignoring all opportunities for expression and color. He thwacks the notes along with determination and briskness, presumably to get it over the sooner.

It is virtually impossible to compare this performance with that released by RCA-Victor under Sir Thomas Beecham (TNR May '49), for only similar things can be compared. What Sir Thomas does with relatively ordinary singers and the thrice-familiar score is unbelievable. Even if the RCA-Victor set does not come out on LP (although it has been promised for this fall) it is still a far better buy, worth several times the price of the present set.

The recording is good in the Columbia set but not nearly so fine as the Victor 78 RPM job which, to be fair, verged on the phenomenal. A complete French-English libretto has been included. W.

Weber: Der Freischütz (complete). (Sung in German). Elfriede Trötschel, Irma Beilke (sopranos); Bernd Aldenhoff (tenor); Karl Paul (baritone); Kurt Böhme, Heinz Kramer (bassos); with the Chorus of the Dresden State Opera directed by Prof. Ernst Hinze and the Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-403) \$14.55.

The third recording of Weber's *Der Freischütz* makes its appearance this month and can be accounted, in many respects, the best of all. The performance has sweep and imagination, some good singing and moments of real grandeur. Naturally, in an opera as long as this (it runs for a little over two hours) there are some moments when things do not go smoothly; but the spirit is always there, despite the weaknesses of the flesh.

The principals are all competent and interesting. First honors go to Kurt Böhme as Kaspar and Elfriede Trötschel as Agathe. Böhme has, as many collectors know, a resounding bass voice that he always uses to great effect. His Kaspar is villainous and, when called for, cringing. His singing of the *Trinklied* and the big aria *Der Holle Netzt* is at once musical and dramatic. Mme. Trötschel's merits as a singer are a soprano voice of nice quality, a sensitive ear, a refined style and an intelligent delivery. In her big *scena*, *Leise, leise fromme weise* and the aria *Und ob die Völke*, these qualities are amply in evidence.

The tenor, Bernd Aldenhoff does not have a good voice, but makes most of his effects with passion and sincerity. This may not please some people, but this reviewer when faced with the choice of a good singer and poor expression and a mediocre voice but intelligent expression much prefers the latter. Irma Beilke is a sprightly Annchen and the minor roles are invariably sung well. For Rudolf Kempe's direction there is nothing but praise. His beat is sure and the orchestra responds nobly. The overture is stunningly performed and the choral passages are sung with fervor and realism. The spoken dialogue is very expressively done and is extraordinarily convincing.

Urania's recording is uneven. There are portions that sound as fine as anything on LP, but there are a few passages that should have been re-made, notably the finale to the scene in the Wolf's Glen. A complete libretto is included.

W.

Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz—Suzel, buon di ("Cherry duet") (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Joan Hammond (soprano) and Rudolf Schock (tenor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. 1-12" disc (V-DB-21098) \$1.84.

We found this recording thoroughly delightful. Miss Hammond is well-known in this country through her many recordings and in the present selection she is joined by a very able Austrian tenor, Rudolf Schock. Herr Schock is a stranger to us but we certainly liked the sample of his art that the present disc supplies, and we will be looking for any other recordings he may have made in England or on the Continent.

PIANO



Piano Music of Fauré. Emma Boynet (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6910) \$5.95.

(6) *Barcarolles*, Op. 26, 41, 42, 44, 66, and 70.

Trois romances sans paroles, Op. 17.

Improvisation, Op. 84, No. 5.

Clair de lune, Op. 46, No. 2.

Fauré: Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 111.

Gaby Casadesus (piano) with the Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Eugène Bigot. One side, and **Debussy: Pour le piano—Suite**. Gaby Casadesus (piano). 1-10" disc (*VX-PL-1780) \$4.75.

Debussy: Images (Books I and II). Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2188) \$4.

Gabriel Fauré, never considered one of the great men of music, has always had an appeal for a section of the music-loving public. We have always been hard put to define this appeal because Fauré's music, in the main, is undramatic, not too original, and inclined to ramble. He was not an innovator and had no particular axe to grind; he was, for want of a better word, a "quiet" composer. Now that LP is with us, M. Fauré is represented almost every month by a new release; this month we consider two!

We found Emma Boynet's offering on Vox about as representative a group of Fauré's compositions as you're likely to find. She plays beautifully and the music itself is varied enough to wear well. Gaby Casadesus presents a composition new to us in the *Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra*. It is a pleasant piece, with no earth-shaking qualities, and sounds rather like a happy blending of Chopin and Rachmaninoff. To round out this disc, Miss Casadesus presents Debussy's *Pour le piano*, which is always a delight to hear when played by an artist of her calibre.

We have left to last the accepted master of Debussy's piano music: Walter Gieseking. His return to records is being slowly accomplished after the unfortunate boycotting of his concerts and his pre-war recordings. Politics and music, for us, have never been playfellows and it has been our experience that musicians who have been hounded for "aiding and abetting the enemy" have actually done little else but practice their profession and have accomplished nothing more ideological than the right to earn a living. Needless to say, Walter Gieseking is back again and maintains his post as the interpreter of Debussy.

Mozart: Sonata No. 1 in C, K. 279. One side, and

Mozart: Sonata No. 2 in F, K. 280. Florencia Raitzin (piano). 1-12" disc (*REB-LP-4) \$5.95.

Mozart: Sonata in F, K. 494/533. One side, and

Mozart: Rondo in A minor, K. 511 and Mozart: Suite in the style of Handel, K. 385 and Mozart: Gigue, K. 574. Charles Rosen (piano). 1-12" disc (*REB-LP-5) \$5.95.

This pair of LP discs will introduce to many of our readers two very talented pianists. Florencia Raitzin was born in Buenos Aires and began her musical studies there. Argentinian and American scholarships brought her to New York where she graduated with honors. Since 1946 she has been a pupil of Wanda Landowska . . . Charles Rosen was born in New York in 1927. He has studied with Moriz Rosenthal, Hedwig Kanner-Rosenthal and Robert Casadesus. Music is only one of his activities—he is at present an instructor in the Department of Romance Language at Princeton University.

The space available does not permit our going into these various recordings in any detail. We can say that both artists seem to have a particular flair for Mozart and that all of the recordings have been very successfully accomplished.

Trends in Contemporary Piano Music (Vol. I). Elly Kassman (piano). 1-12" disc (*GRIFFON-1003) \$4.85.

Hindemith: *Sonata No. 2*.

Poulenc: *Suite pour piano*.

Stravinsky: *Sonata (1924)*.

Stravinsky: (4) *Etudes*, Op. 7.

Elly Kassman, who for a number of years has been specializing in contemporary music for her instru-

ment, was born in Finland. At the age of six she came to America with her family. Her father, a violinist of note in his native country, was engaged by the Boston Symphony, and Miss Kassman shortly began the study of the piano. In her early teens she began her concert career and has appeared in numerous recitals and with chamber ensembles in both the United States and Canada. She has been engaged as soloist by the Boston Symphony, Hartford Symphony and Michigan Symphony.

We found her interpretation of the contemporary music on the present disc interesting, and we believe that those music lovers who find such music appealing will wish to hear her recordings. The piano reproduction on this disc is satisfactory but not by any means the best that we have heard.

Stravinsky: Sonata for Two Pianos. One side, and **Bowles: Sonata for Two Pianos.** Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale (duo-pianists). 1-10" disc (*CH-CHS-1089) \$4.67

To those of our readers whose taste includes modern piano music and who are not dismayed by dissonance, we wish to report that Concert Hall has made available to the general public two works from its limited edition series. Although Stravinsky's and Bowles' compositions may superficially appear of the same sort, there is much to listen to in both that is decidedly different. It is interesting to compare the Russian's suave, seasoned writing with the young American's brash but exciting work. Messrs. Gold and Fizdale, already noted for their interpretations in the modern idiom, add more luster to their crowns with this disc.

The cover for this disc lists Stravinsky's *Cinq Pièces Faciles* as being part of the program; the label on the disc does not. The label is correct.

Semprini: Mediterranean Concerto. Semprini (piano). 1-10" disc (V-B-9954) \$1.05.

This disc has been on the best sellers list in England for some time. *Mediterranean Concerto* is a pleasing and tuneful trifle—just the sort of thing that might catch on over here if it were plugged over the air as it has been by its composer on the BBC in England. Those who are in England this summer will probably hear this number many times—if they would like to have a recording of it, upon their return, it is available.

Schumann: Kreisleriana, Op. 16. One and one-half sides, and **Schumann: Novelletto No. 8 in F-sharp minor.** Ray Lev (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1102) \$5.95.

Schumann: Kinderscenen, Op. 15. One side, and **Schumann: Papillons, Op. 2.** Guiomar Novaes (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6900) \$5.95.

Robert Schumann's *Kreisleriana* might pose a question in the minds of readers who are unfamiliar with this particular work. The Kreisler referred to in the title (also the inspiration of the work) was a character in a book by one of Schumann's favorite au-

thors—E. T. A. Hoffmann. The musical work is a series of extended piano pieces of varying mood and color, intended, no doubt, to suggest the views and adventures of the eccentric musician, Kreisler. None of the sections is titled so we may conclude that the music is not programmatic. Taken as absolute music, it is still of sufficient interest to survive without "extra" meaning. The *Novelette* which fills the last half of the final side is characteristic Schumann, full of vigor and melody.

In contrast to the lesser-known works offered above by Ray Lev, Guiomar Novaes presents us with more customary fare. That *Scenes from Childhood* and *Papillons* are played more often does not detract from their appeal, and under Miss Novaes' touch their romantic charm and delicacy are again manifest. Both discs would make fine additions to the library; but if the budget allows only one, we suggest the Novaes record as being more "listenable."

A Schumann-Brahms Recital. Gyorgy Sandor (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4375) \$5.45.

Schumann: *Papillons*, Op. 2.

The Prophet Bird, Op. 82, No. 7.

Toccata in C, Op. 7.

Brahms: (3) *Intermezzos*, Op. 117.

Intermezzo in B minor, Op. 119, No. 1.

Intermezzo in A, Op. 118, No. 2.

Brahms: (3) Intermezzos, Op. 117. One side, and **Brahms: (2) Rhapsodies, Op. 79.** Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-205) \$4.95.

Schumann: Fantasia in C, Op. 17. Robert Weisz (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-152) \$4.95.

The three LP discs listed above contain a wealth of keyboard music by Schumann and Brahms. Gyorgy Sandor and Wilhelm Kempff are well known to all record enthusiasts because of their many fine recordings. However, Robert Weisz, a new comer, rates a word or two of identification. He was the winner of first prize in the Geneva Concours of 1949 and has the distinction of being one of the very few pupils of the late Dinu Lipatti, whose recent death in Switzerland when but thirty years of age took from the world all too soon a very great virtuoso and master musician.

Collectors of keyboard music will find these three discs worth at least a hearing.

Prokofiev: Sonata No. 6, Op. 82. One side, and **Prokofiev: (20) Visions Fugitives, Op. 22.** Leonard Pennario (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8113) \$4.98.

Although the brilliant young American pianist, Leonard Pennario, has appeared with a number of important symphony orchestras and at the 1949 Berkshire Festival, we are sure that many of our readers have not had a chance to hear this very fine artist. The present disc will give them an opportunity to study and enjoy his playing. He has selected two Prokofiev selections for the present LP disc. The *Vision Fugitives* is a series of twenty short "mood" pieces based on poems by Balmont varying in feeling

from a sensitive lyricism to a restless chaos. The Sixth Sonata dates from 1939-41 and is typical of Prokofiev's style. Those interested in the music of this great modern composer will surely be taken with this selection. The piano reproduction on this disc rates with the very best.

Rachmaninoff: Suite No. 1 for Two Pianos, Op. 5. One side, and **Rachmaninoff: Suite No. 2 for Two Pianos, Op. 17.** Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4379) \$5.45.

Some ten years ago, Vronsky and Babin recorded these suites for RCA Victor. Their appeal was largely to those persons interested in two piano music, and while the sale of these recordings was not great it was steady. We presume that the present LP disc will not cause much of a stir upon its release but we predict that it will remain in the catalog indefinitely—there will always be someone who will want a recording of these tuneful Rachmaninoff selections. Not great music but the performances of the very talented team of Vronsky and Babin are superb—here is an example of the playing being superior to the music played.

An Eileen Joyce Piano Recital (Vol. I). Eileen Joyce (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7504) \$3.85.

An Eileen Joyce Piano Recital (Vol. II). Eileen Joyce (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7513) \$3.85.

The distinguished English pianist (she was born in Tasmania—reared in Australia—lived in England since she was a girl), Eileen Joyce, is well known to American music lovers through her many recordings. Decca has gathered together a large group of her representative recordings for the two LP discs listed above. There are fourteen selections on these two records ranging from Bach, Mozart and Schubert to Chopin, Greig and Rachmaninoff. Those who are interested in the playing of this fine artist will probably wish to hear these recordings.

Haydn: Sonata No. 44 in G minor. One side, and **Haydn: Sonata No. 45 in E-flat.** Virginia Pleasants (piano). 1-10" disc (*HS-HSLP-3033) \$4.75.

Haydn: Sonata No. 48 in C. One side, and **Haydn: Sonata No. 51 in D.** Virginia Pleasants (piano). 1-10" disc (*HS-HSLP-3032) \$4.75.

These little sonatas, while pleasing enough in their modest way, will be of interest to the students of Haydn and those persons who are making a collection of his recorded works rather than the general music loving public. These recordings were made by the talented young American pianist, Virginia Pleasants, during December 1950 in the Symphonia Studio of the Konzerthaus in Vienna. A middle-sized Bösendorfer piano was used by Mrs. Pleasants. The recordings were most successfully accomplished.

Chopin: (4) Ballades. Leonid Hambro (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-115) \$5.45.

Leonid Hambro, the brilliant American pianist, adds to his substantial list of Allegro LP recordings the present very excellent disc. However, he is in

stiff competition with Casadesus' Columbia recording (*C-ML-2137) of these romantic little Chopin pieces, which appeared less than a year ago. We seem to think that the French pianist has greater sympathy for the poetic quality of these selections, and we would therefore choose the Casadesus version.

Chopin: (12) Polonaises. Grant Johannesen (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-6840) \$11.90.

The twelve Polonaises on these discs are the usual ten with opus numbers, and two without, which were published after the composer's death. The latter are the *Polonaise in G sharp minor*, which is thought to have been composed by Chopin when he was but twelve years of age, and the *Polonaise in B flat minor*, another early work which probably dates from 1826. This second piece bears the subtitle *Adieu à Guillaume Kolberg*. William Kolberg was a son of a friend of the Chopin family.

The artist who has made these fine recordings is the brilliant American pianist, Grant Johannesen. Mr. Johannesen was born in Salt Lake City and was more or less discovered by the distinguished pianist, Robert Casadesus. At Casadesus' invitation he came to New York to study with him and Egon Petri. His appearances at Town Hall were great successes, and he was acclaimed by the critics as a first rank pianist. He has had triumphant concert tours in the United States, Canada and Europe. He was awarded the First Grand Prize at the International Piano Festival in Belgium and the American Artists' Award.

The present recordings will give many music lovers an opportunity to appraise the playing of this fine American artist.

Schubert: Grand Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. posth. Lili Kraus (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6940) \$5.95.

Schubert: Sonata in B-flat, Op. posth. Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-307) \$5.95.

Two very great interpreters of Schubert's keyboard music, Lili Kraus and Wilhelm Kempff, offer fine performances on this pair of LP records. Very good piano reproduction adds to the charm of these splendid recordings.

Chopin: Waltz No. 1 in E-flat, Op. 18 ("Grande valse brillante"). One side, and **Chopin: Waltz No. 9 in A-flat, Op. 69, No. 1** ("L'adieu"). Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-3294) \$1.31. 1-7" disc (øV-49-3294) \$1.16.

Brailowsky is one of our favorite Chopin interpreters, and he does not disappoint us with the renditions to be found on the present disc. The best of RCA Victor reproduction is in evidence.



DICTION

Shakespeare: Richard II (excerpts). Stratford-upon-Avon Festival Company. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALD-8001) \$5.95).

An able cast from the Stratford-upon-Avon Festival Company gives several important scenes from

Shakespeare's *Richard II*. Robert Harris plays the title role, and John Ruddock, who in his voice and diction reminds this reviewer of Ben Greet, takes the part of John of Gault. We wonder if some other oldsters who were introduced to the great bard by that kindly old actor (afterwards Sir Philip Ben Greet) will note the resemblance. There is not enough of the play on this single disc to make much sense to those persons who are not familiar with it. However, those who are students of Shakespeare will doubtless get great enjoyment from hearing these short scenes so brilliantly portrayed.

Rostand: *Cyrano de Bergerac* (selections). José Ferrer, Patricia Wheel, and Ralph Clanton with supporting cast. 1-12" disc (*CL-S-283) \$5.72.

For those who know the play or those who have seen the movie, these excerpts tied together with brief narrations, will doubtless be of especial interest. Others will not get much from this recording—a booklet giving the plot and describing the scenes would have been a great help to the uninitiated.

ORGAN



Organ Music of Buxtehude (Vol. II). Robert Noehren (organ). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-113) \$5.45.

Choral Prelude—*Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist*.

Choral Prelude—*Magnificat primi toni*.

Choral Fantasia—*Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*.

Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne.

Prelude and Fugue in D.

Prelude and Fugue in F-sharp minor.

In the June 1951 issue of TNR, we reviewed a couple of Noehren's discs, for which he used the organ of Grace Episcopal Church, Sandusky, Ohio. The organ, which we have already described, is also used for this group of Buxtehude selections. Noehren excels in playing this master's music, which is music second only to Bach in the opinion of many. Those who like great organ music played with classic purity will find this disc of interest. The *Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne* was the high spot of the group for us. The other two Preludes and Fugues are great examples of imposing architecture in organ literature, while the choral-preludes contain a surprising amount of romantic quality. There is more warmth and beauty to much of this older music than we are usually led to believe. The performing artist is responsible for how much of it we hear. Noehren lets us have a glimpse of it, some organists shut it out entirely, some overdo the romantic angle. And some of the orchestrators really lay it on thick. We would say Noehren's approach is reasonable, and we will echo our sentiments of the June review by wishing again that the church building in Sandusky had more resonance.

The reproduction is good, of the close-to variety, not much perspective, and very revealing. S.

HARPSICHORD



Couperin: Music for the Harpsichord. Claude Jean Chiasson (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-12) \$5.95.

Les Fastes de la grande et ancienne Ménestrandise.
Chaconne: La Favorite.

Les Folies françaises ou les Dominos.

Passacaille in B minor.

L'Arlequine.

Couperin: Harpsichord Suite No. 24. Eta Harich-Schneider (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (*UR-URLP-5001) \$4.75.

This pair of LP discs will introduce to many of our readers two very fine harpsichordists. Claude Jean Chiasson, pianist, organist, harpsichordist and scholar, has devoted his life largely to the study and interpretation of early French keyboard music. During the last several years he has given over three hundred concerts in the United States and Canada. He is also very much interested in designing and constructing harpsichords—the one used for his recordings was constructed by M. Chiasson for Mr. Robert Conant and is used through the courtesy of the owner.

Eta Harich-Schneider studied piano in Berlin with Georg Bertram and later turned to the harpsichord. For that instrument she had the privilege of the instruction of one of the world's greatest teachers and players, Wanda Landowska. In 1931 Miss Harich-Schneider founded the Berlin College of Ancient Music and remained its director for several years. Her concert tours took her to all parts of the world and gained for her the reputation of being the leading German harpsichordist. During World War II she was trapped in Japan and had to remain there until the end of hostilities. She is now living in New York.

Those interested in harpsichord music in general and Couperin in particular will find these discs well worth investigation.

Bach: English Suite No. 2 in A minor. One side, and **Bach: English Suite No. 3 in G minor**. Alice Ehlers (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3017) \$5.95.

Bach: English Suite No. 4 in F. One side, and **Bach: French Suite No. 2 in C minor**. Denise Restout (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*REB-LP-1) \$5.95.

These fine harpsichord recordings were made by two former pupils of the great Wanda Landowska. Miss Restout came to the United States with her famous teacher and has remained with her since as a disciple, assistant and secretary. Miss Ehlers, after many years of concert tours that took her practically all over the world, came to this country and since 1942 has been a Professor of Music at the University

of Southern California. She teaches the harpsichord and holds classes for instrumentalists and singers in the interpretation of 18th century music.

These Bach selections are in good hands, as you will find out when you have the opportunity of hearing them. We are sure that you will also be well pleased with the fidelity of the reproduction.

Bach: Prelude and Fugue in A minor and Bach: Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo. One side, and **Bach: Toccata in D minor and Bach: Das musikalische Opfer**—Ricercare a tre. Edith Weiss-Mann (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-80) \$5.45.

Bach: Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D minor. One side, and **Bach: Toccata in D and Bach: Toccata in C minor.** Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-105) \$5.45.

This pair of discs will give those music lovers, who are interested in the harpsichord and the music of the immortal Bach, a grand opportunity for an hour or so's enjoyment of music of their liking. Mme. Weiss-Mann was well known to record collectors because of her many excellent recordings. However, Fernando Valenti may be a new name to many of our readers because it has only been within the last couple of years that he has come into prominence in the musical life of this country. He has appeared with the New York Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony. His debut recital in New York's Town Hall in 1950 was a brilliant success. Also in 1950 he participated in the Bach Festival at Prades under Pablo Casals, and in the late summer of that year he was the resident harpsichordist of the Aspen Festival in Aspen, Colorado.

Mr. Valenti's disc will serve as an excellent introduction to many of our readers of an artist of most unusual talents.

MISCELLANEOUS



Two Thousand Years of Music. Compiled and arranged by Dr. Curt Sachs. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-106) \$11.70.

A number of years ago a set of records was issued in Germany exemplifying the development of music "from the earliest times through the 18th century." It was compiled and arranged by the noted musicologist, Dr. Curt Sachs, and bore the title "2,000 Years of Music." Thousands of sets of these discs were sold throughout the world. Recently Decca has transcribed these recordings on two LP discs and is making them available with copious notes by Dr. Sachs. Music lovers generally, and music students particularly, owe a debt of thanks to Decca for making this fine set of recordings available again.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletones, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, FEST—Festival, HS—Hadyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PLM—Polymusic, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
 ♂ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 8

OCTOBER, 1951

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

IT WOULD seem that the days of the 78 rpm records are limited. Without any official announcements the record manufacturers are refraining from issuing new releases at that speed. What has been considered the standard speed (78 rpm) is certainly no longer "standard." In our last issue of THE NEW RECORDS, except for imported recordings, we listed but three new items that were available in 78 rpm pressings. Columbia and RCA Victor seem to be willing to accept orders for most of their older recordings at the old speed, but in spite of this, these are more and more difficult to obtain. It is probably only a matter of time until these will not be available at all.

We wonder what has become of the thousands upon thousands of older phonographs whose turntables revolved only at 78 rpm. Surely only a certain proportion of them has been converted to play the two new speeds. Are the folks who own them satisfied to play only their old records—aren't they buying any new ones? It would seem not, because if there were any great demand for new 78 rpm records, surely the manufacturers would continue to make them. We notice that several of the record companies are releasing quite a few of their older recordings at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ and 45 rpm without any special announcement. If you have in mind some favorite recordings that you would like to have at either of the new speeds, do not take for granted that they are not available because you have not seen them listed anywhere—ask your record dealer about them. It may very well be that they can be had for the asking.

Those record collectors who are interested in artists who stopped making recordings before the two new speeds were introduced should lose no time in securing any particular records they may wish. It is very unlikely that

many of them will be reissued at the new speeds. This is particularly true of artists who have passed on and of obscure selections without a wide general appeal. These may not be so easy to find, for the vast majority of record dealers have discontinued stocking 78 rpm records. However, in nearly every large city there are one or two dealers who are making some effort to keep up their stock of the older records. These dealers should be sought out without delay because, try as they may, it will seemingly be impossible for them to keep their stocks from gradually diminishing.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Hindemith: Symphony in E-flat (1940). Janssen Symphony Orchestra of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4387) \$5.45.

Hindemith: Kammermusik No. 4, Op. 36, No. 3. Peter Rybar (violin) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One side, and **Hindemith: Theme and Four Variations** ("The Four Temperaments"). Franz Holletschek (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5074) \$5.95.

It has been pointed out that although there is no suggestion of a key signature throughout the above

symphony, the "feel" of tonality exists even though the texture of the music is dissonant. The work in general is in classical form. There is no wasting time with immaterial details. The composition is in four movements and is one of great power and intensity without being overly blatant and nervous. Hindemith is a well-rounded musician who has exerted a strong influence on most of the younger composers of our day.

Werner Janssen is a man who seeks the unusual to present to the public and in so doing is rendering a great and needed service. His orchestra is a competent one, and Janssen himself is a knowing and clever musician, whose ability to "sell" new music through an intense and convincing performance is on a par with Stokowski. His rendition of Hindemith's *Symphony in E-flat* is a stunning one which we found nearly as fascinating as the music itself. The reproduction is revealing and clear.

Kammermusik, No. 4 is actually a violin concerto, although its form does not match the usual concerto form. Parts of this work (written in 1925) we found pretty rough going, the evocative third movement, *Nocturne*, being the easiest to take. Between 1922 and 1930, Hindemith composed seven small concerti with chamber orchestra, for various solo instruments—the present recording is of one of these seven. Peter Rybar plays valiantly and the Winterthur Orchestra companions him well. It is all quite interesting, but not our cup of tea.

The Four Temperaments is one of Hindemith's earliest works to be written in America (1940). First planned as a ballet, it was written as a straight composition, but was later made into a ballet. The work is a theme and four variations. Actually the theme is divided into three distinct sections with each of the four variations similarly divided, the three original sections being treated in the same order in each variation. The net result is four threefold variations on a threefold theme. Furthermore, each variation seems to progress farther away from the original theme. Complicated? Wait until you hear the music. It struck us as a clever exercise, more mathematical than musical. We can guarantee it will not excite your emotions. The performance is about as good as Lucas Foss' (*D-DL-7501), recording likewise. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A, Op. 92. Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4414) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Carl Schuricht. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9534) \$5.85.

With this recording of the *Seventh*, Bruno Walter has now recorded all the Beethoven symphonies except Nos. 2 and 4. These are available on LP discs, and the two unrecorded works will no doubt complete the series one of these days. The *Seventh*

is on LP discs by a number of outstanding conductors, including Toscanini, Münch, Ormandy, and Kleiber. Bruno Walter's idea of the *Seventh* is something quite different from any of the others, and quite different in spots from anything we have ever heard. Münch had some individual ideas, but Walter outclasses him for originality. What we did not care for too much is Walter's variations in tempo. This sort of thing is all right at times if the general feeling of the music can stand it; but Walter is just capricious about tempo, notably in the third and fourth movements. Generally his third movement is slower than most conductors take it, and his fourth is quite fast—so fast that the orchestra smears it up in several places.

Despite all the nasty things we have said, the over-all effect of the work is good; surprisingly enough, the general effect is one of a relaxed performance. That, of course, is typical of Walter readings—the sheer virtuosity of his conducting is deceptive. The way he handles the first movement is so impressive that it carries through to the end of the symphony. He gets the most unexpected effects by changing the accepted balance of voices, giving prominence to inner parts which change the chord as your ear hears it. This occurs several times, and you think you are hearing this thing for the first time. Well, so it goes; you will have to listen to this disc to decide whether it is for you. We still like Toscanini and Münch the best, while confessing a temporary infatuation with the Walter reading.

If you are a music student, or like to follow scores with your records, the Schuricht *Eroica* will offer you a chance to find out just how this piece should be played. Every inch of the way it is clean, clear, distinct, and correct. And it is as dry as dust. If Schuricht was ever kissed by inspiration, it was not on the day this recording was made. Let Walter, Mengelberg, Koussevitzky, or Toscanini show you the message the music contains. S.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 2 in C Minor. Linz Bruckner Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ludwig Georg Jochum. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-402) \$9.70.

Brucknerites can have another celebration to welcome the recording of the *Second Symphony*. It is a recording by a group that plays with love and devotion and with obvious feeling for the music. The performance is a beauty and the reproduction leaves nothing to be desired. We would not try to sell anyone this symphony who has not already become a confirmed Brucknerite. If you wish to try Bruckner for the first time, tackle the magnificent *Fourth* just issued by Vox—Klemperer conducting. But if you know your way around with Bruckner and thirst for the *Second Symphony*, here is a performance that will warm the cockles of your heart—every bar is conducted and played *con amore*.

Urania has placed each of the four movements on

one side of an LP disc, which results in less music than we usually get on a 12" side, but they have compensated for this by charging less per disc, giving you the maximum convenience without paying a premium for it. Very nice of them! The first movement, timed at seventeen minutes, is pure Bruckner, as most of us consider him, from the very opening phrase. A long melody in the celli starts the work, which includes a typical development, the type of which we often find in Bruckner's symphonies. The second movement, of about the same length, is a deep expression of solemn and devotional nature, with the usual lofty passages that breathe calm assurance. The third movement, of nine and one-half minutes, is a Scherzo, one of Bruckner's unique specialties, complete with dancelike rhythm, peasant melody, trio, and coda—the usual gem in this form. The sixteen minute last movement is a triumphant summation of grandiose proportion and thrilling power, although this one is relieved by unusually long stretches of contrasting calm. In all this is a successful recording of the work, to be recommended to those who are interested in the music. S.

Mozart: (6) Sonatas for Organ and Orchestra. Hans Messner (organ) with the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Paul Walter. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: March in D, K. 249** ("Haffner"). Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Paul Walter. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-534) \$5.95.

These five-minute, one movement organ sonatas were a completely secular device introduced into the church service by Hieronymus, Archbishop of Salzburg, as part of his effort to emulate the glamour and resplendence of the court, and generally to make the service less tedious for the unfortunate churchgoers. Considering their function, the sonatas are neither as good nor as bad as they might be. The writing of these brief movements to order neither demanded great inspiration nor got it. Mozart wrote seventeen such pieces before Hieronymus in 1783 put an end to all purely instrumental music in his cathedral. The early sonatas are scored for strings and organ, the later ones add some winds. Noticeably absent from all is a part for viola. The instrumentation was undoubtedly conditioned by the available manpower resources of the Salzburg Cathedral.

For the record, the six sonatas here recorded are: No. 1 in E flat, K. 67; No. 2 in B flat, K. 68; No. 3 in D, K. 69; No. 6 in B flat, K. 212; No. 8 in A, K. 225; and No. 14 in C, K. 329. None of these duplicate the set of six issued by Victor several years ago with E. Power Biggs and the Fiedler Sinfonietta. And where Biggs' organ was perky and squeaky, the present instrument is some tubby and hooty affair with little definition of its own, and no profile in the recorded sound. Of the two evils, Biggs' was possibly the lesser. What we can distinguish of the organ in the present recording sounds as though it is being played with good style; the accompaniments are also

nicely turned. The effect of the whole disc to us was rather pleasant music without any particular characteristics. Nice for background music against an evening's conversation. S.

Tschaikovsky: Aurora's Wedding. Royal Opera Orchestra (Covent Garden, London) conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-524) \$3.

Tschaikovsky: The Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a. Kurt Graunke Orchestra conducted by Werner Schmidt-Boelcke. 1-10" disc (*ME-MG-15017) \$3.85.

Music of Tschaikovsky. MGM Orchestra conducted by Macklin Marrow. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-510) \$3.

Romance in F, Op. 51, No. 5.

Song Without Words, Op. 2, No. 3.

Humoresque, Op. 10, No. 2.

The Months, Op. 37a—October (Autumn Song).

The Months, Op. 37a—June (Barcarolle).

Melodie, Op. 42, No. 3.

None But the Lonely Heart, Op. 6, No. 6.

Serenade in C, Op. 48—Waltz.

We have here three discs presenting Tschaikovsky's lighter side in music. *Aurora's Wedding*, which is in actuality Act III of *The Sleeping Beauty*, is a popular item with ballet companies because it is a unit in itself and need not be presented as part of the full ballet. It contains some of Tschaikovsky's most engaging music and is played beautifully by an orchestra well-known for its splendid work in this field. Mr. Braithwaite wields a masterful baton throughout. As for the *Nutcracker Suite*, of which Mercury's version is the umpteenth now available on LP, we must confess that while another one is not at all necessary, Werner Schmidt-Boelcke does a very satisfactory job with a most responsive orchestra. Macklin Marrow, conducting eight familiar Tschaikovsky works, supplies a pleasant candidate for your dinner music collection. Well-recorded and remarkably free from that "trite" feeling, this little collection comes as an agreeable surprise.

Prokofiev: The Love for Three Oranges, Op. 33a—Suite. One side, and **Prokofiev: Lieutenant Kije, Op. 60—Suite.** French National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8149) \$4.98.

Now that Capitol has pretty well exhausted the Telefunken catalog for reissuing on LP, they have turned to current recordings. Some that they have made in California have proved to be very fine, and some that are being made for them in Europe rate with the best of today's efforts. The present one is an example. Here we have a conductor who has distinguished himself in the past, notably on Oiseau-Lyre in early music. He has also proved himself a good interpreter of some lighter music from the romantic period, and here we have him doing Prokofiev. His Prokofiev ranks with the best we have ever

heard. The French National Orchestra plays admirably and the reproduction is excellent.

The suite from *The Love for Three Oranges* comprises six sections entitled: Les ridicules; Scene infernale; Marche; Scherzo; Le Prince et La Princesse; and La fuite. The two interludes, Marche and Scherzo, are familiar to most folks by now, but the other sections drawn from the opera are just as delightful, and combine to make this suite most rewarding. The fifth number, a love duet, is about the only purely lyrical music in the opera; the rest is rather bizarre music with the characteristic twists that make it enjoyable listening. Désormière does well with every bar of this music; it is a pure delight.

Lieutenant Kije is well known from a previous recording by Koussevitzky. The five sections of this suite are: The Birth of Kije; Romance; Kije's Wedding; Troika; and The Burial of Kije. Here the music is more subtle in its humor than in the *Oranges* suite. *Kije* is music of superlative style, empty pomp, false sentimentality, mock-heroic gestures that become the story perfectly. None but a master hand could create such music. All of this is well realized by Désormière's reading, which does not overdo the obvious, yet retains plenty of bite.

These two suites make a choice coupling for a 12" LP disc, and we can recommend this one without reservation. S.

Bach: Suite No. 2 in B minor. Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-313) \$4.95.

Bach: Suite No. 2 in B minor. One side, and **Bach: Suite No. 3 in D.** Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Rieger. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10068) \$4.85.

The four *Suites* and the six *Brandenburg Concertos* represent Bach's major essays for orchestra. Numerous recordings of the *Brandenburg Concertos* are now available and the *Suites* are now coming in for their share of multiple diskings. No. 4 is made only by Koussevitzky thus far. The other three fare better with two each of the *First* and *Third* and four for the *Second* (including the present versions).

The *Second* appears on a London 10" disc covering both sides. It is a wonderful performance which we would not blame anyone for calling the best of the four recordings available. The feeling for line and texture is splendid and the seriousness of intent is evident in the over-all weight of the performance. By comparison the Mercury disc seems to border on the superficial. But the truth is that it is not superficial—it is a marvelously flexible and vigorous reading with a nice variety of expression. The reproduction by London is fittingly dark and rather heavy, while the Mercury is very brilliant with a little too much treble pre-emphasis which can, of course, be "tone-controlled" down by the listener.

The *Second* suite, in its various versions, is coupled with the *Suite No. 1* (Prades Festival Orchestra), the Mozart *Symphony No. 35* (Pittsburgh Orchestra),

and on the Mercury disc with the *Suite No. 3*. This *Third Suite* receives a beautiful reading, the lovely "Air" being taken at a most leisurely and effective tempo.

Münchinger and the Stuttgart Orchestra have also recorded the *Suite No. 3* on a London 10" disc, which means that you will have to get two 10" discs, and turn each one, to get the same music as you find on the one Mercury 12" disc, each work complete on one side. For our money the Mercury disc is definitely the buy. S.

Weber: Symphony No. 2 in C. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Robert Heger, and **Weber: Oberon—Overture.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **Weber: Concertino in C minor, Op. 26.** Alfred Buerkner (clarinet) with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ernst Schrader, and **Weber: Euryanthe—Overture.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7012) \$5.95.

Don't be misled by the quantity of works listed on this disc; it looks like a hodge-podge, but it is not. This disc is one that offers a good value. Four works are on it and every one is excellently performed and recorded. The two familiar overtures which appear at the end of each record side are both conducted by Arthur Rother and they are sterling readings of these often maligned pieces. They are a worthwhile bonus on this disc.

The *Symphony No. 2* is a seventeen minute work which abounds in pleasant tunes and turns out to be a novelty which is worthy of a performance now and then. We found it wholly delightful and recommend this disc for the symphony, if for nothing else. The veteran conductor Robert Heger gives it a reading which we would venture as definitive for style. Some day the full genius of Weber will be realized and his great output will receive wider recognition in more performances, a statement we have made before in these columns. At least *Der Freischütz* is now on LP in three recordings. In all, eleven of his pieces are now on LP discs, with reason to believe our European friends will continue to supply us with more tapes of his best works.

Getting back to this admirable disc, we come to the *Concertino for Clarinet*, an instrument in which Weber specialized, his *Grand Duo Concertant* being the most difficult piece of clarinet music ever written. The *Concertino* has no clear-cut division of movements. It is a genuinely romantic work, composed with a purposeful eye to the difficulty of performance. Its difficulty has been greatly lessened by the flexibility of modern clarinets, but it takes an expert to do it justice even now. Such a man is the present soloist who plays it beautifully. His tone is lovely and his phrasing and dynamics are admirable. Schrader and the Berlin Philharmonic supply a most sympathetic accompaniment. The reproduction throughout this disc is of today's best. The quality of the clarinet is

remarkably faithful, and the many niceties of orchestral playing found in these works is revealed fully. In all we would call this disc a choice one from every aspect.

Haydn: Symphony No. 43 in E-flat ("Mercury").

One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 50 in C.** Chamber Orchestra of the Danish State Radio conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-1041) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 86 in D. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 95 in C minor.** Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Paul Walter. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-516) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 101 in D ("The Clock"). Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Reinwald. 1-10" disc (*ME-MG-15018) \$3.85.

Of the five Haydn symphonies listed above, Nos. 43, 50, and 86 make their appearance on LP for the first time. Mogens Wöldike and the Danish State Radio Orchestra make their debut also, via the Haydn Society presentation of the "Mercury" Symphony and *Symphony No. 50*. Performing stylishly and accurately, they give luster to a symphony (No. 43) which does not rely on special effects—in spite of its nickname "Mercury." As for the No. 50, Mr. Wöldike and his colleagues give not only a fine performance, but also what amounts to a first performance. This symphony was never published and has survived only in manuscript; this performance is reputedly the first since the composer's day. Disregarding the fact that it is a "rare" item, it is still worthy of a place with the best of Haydn's symphonies.

The Period disc, with Paul Walter and the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra, is up against stiff competition after Scherchen's presentation on *WEST-WL-5045 of the No. 95 and the "Military" Symphony. However, as a performance it is nicely accomplished and offers, in addition, No. 86—a newcomer to LP. The "Clock" Symphony, presented here in its fourth LP version, is given a pleasantly precise performance by Georg Reinwald and the Munich Philharmonic; however, we question the wisdom of another recording of this symphony when there is so much that has not been recorded that is equally worth while.

Handel—arr. Schönberg: Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra. One side, and **Bach—arr. Mozart: Prelude and Fugue No. 1** (From Six Three-Voice Fugues, K. 404a) and **Bach—arr. Mozart: Prelude and Fugue No. 2** (From Six Three-Voice Fugues, K. 404a). Janssen Symphony Orchestra of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4406) \$5.45.

This remarkably impressive and sonorous composition is what Schönberg himself calls "a free transformation" of Handel's *Concerto Grosso No. 7* from the twelve works in that form which make up Handel's Opus 6. In place of the three-instrument concertino found in the Handel concerto grosso,

Schönberg employs a string quartet, and this he sets against a full modern orchestra of strings, woodwinds, brass, and timpani.

Schönberg makes these interesting comments on his work: "From the standpoint of composition, I have gone further than Brahms or Mozart in their Handel arrangement. I have not limited myself, as they did, to expunging sequences and uninteresting figure-work and to enriching the texture; instead, especially in the third and fourth movements, whose insufficiency with respect to thematic invention and development could satisfy no sincere contemporary of ours, I have acted quite freely and independently, and, while employing what was usable, undertaken an entirely new structure . . ."

The third movement, which was an Andante in Handel's work, has become an Allegretto grazioso with the key changed from B-flat major to D major, and it is more than twice the length of the original. The concluding Hornpipe is also reconstructed and extended.

The main effect we got from this music was that it is very intense, an effect which may be due, all or in part, to the performance. The music is recognizable from an older era, but it has been fused (and most skilfully) with the modern technique of writing. It is a curious mixture, but a highly effective one—and to us rather pleasing. Werner Janssen believes in this thing body and soul, and plays it with an ardor of white heat. This supercharged performance seems to suit it well; but for the fun of it, we would like to hear a nice relaxed continental playing (if such is possible).

Mozart liked to tinker with other fellows' music too, and this time he tried his hand at Bach (who also was a great rewriter of other folks' music). The results are good, if somewhat different from Schönberg's excursion into the same field. This music is also very well played and recorded. A disc of great merit for the venturesome.

Bantock: Fife at the Fair. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 4-12" discs in album (V-DB-9557/60) \$7.36.

Fife at the Fair is subtitled "A Defence of Inconstancy." An Orchestral Drama with a Prologue (after Browning). To translate all of that into Americanese, we would say it is a tone poem cut from the same cloth as most of Richard Strauss' works—except that it is not quite as obvious and commonplace as most of Strauss. Anyone who likes tone poems of the Strauss type will definitely like this work on first hearing. Sir Thomas and the Royal Philharmonic do full justice to the music; the solo clarinetist is notably fine. Reproduction is typical HMV 78 rpm quality which is of a different timbre than our latest LP's, not necessarily better or worse, but with its own advantages.

The story of this work may be serious, but it will cause most of us to snicker a little at the thought of the picture it paints. It is the same

old story of the triangle—the poet swimming in the Ocean of Life, tempted by Fifine, a butterfly who hovers overhead. The work deals with the conditions of passion, doubt, uncertainty and infidelity, and of course, he submits to Fifine and her seductiveness, only to realize the shallowness of this kind of love and return to his constant mate. Oh, well! If the dear boy had not had his fun, we would not have had this tone poem, so we will not argue the moral merits of the case. The best part of the whole thing is that you need pay no attention to the story to enjoy the gorgeous sounds which the orchestra generates. It is better, in fact, if you forget the story, otherwise you might giggle when you should be impressed with the musical fabric which is being woven.

Too little of Bantock has been recorded, for he made a formidable contribution to English music during his time (1868-1946). He was not only a prolific composer, but a conductor and patron of music, doing much to promote good music wherever possible. If *Fifine* were on LP, we would really put on the pressure to urge you at least to hear it; as it is, we will merely hope for its early issuance on LP, and in the meantime suggest you hear for yourself one other who could write magnificent tone poems besides Liszt and Strauss. S.

Bizet: L'Arlésienne Suite No. 1. One side, and **Bizet: L'Arlésienne Suite No. 2** and **Bizet: La Jolie Fille de Perth**—Danse bohémienne. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4409) \$5.45.

Kostelanetz is unquestionably the supreme master among maestros for gilding the lily, understating, overstating, underlining and over-emphasizing everything. But the unassailable truth of the matter is that he is also a sound musician in many respects and is never associated with anything but the very finest playing from an orchestra comprising the best musicians money can buy. His orchestra is superior to anything but a handful of the top European groups—superior to at least seventy-five per cent of the foreign tapes which are invading the LP field these days. For fine playing, his orchestra can stand with the best dozen in this country. This recording of the *L'Arlésienne Suites* boasts playing of breath-taking virtuosity and beauty. We believe any of our major conductors would be pleased with the work of this orchestra.

The final band on side two contains the innocuous Bohemian Dance, also nicely done. By all means hear this disc, if only for the recorded magic it contains. S.

W. Schuman: Symphony No. 3. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4413) \$5.45.

We have, in William Schuman's *Third Symphony*, what we believe to be a major contribution to the symphonic literature. Less obscure and impersonal than his *Second Symphony*, it will un-

doubtedly appeal to a wider audience. We do not mean to indicate by this statement that the *Third Symphony* panders to popular taste; it is still unconventional in many respects. To begin with, it is performed in two sections, each containing two movements played without pause. The movements themselves have been built on classic forms (although the spirit is contemporary) and have the following designations: *Passacaglia*; *Fugue*; *Chorale*; and *Toccata*.

Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra have accorded this symphony an outstanding performance. We have not always been in accord with Maestro Ormandy's presentation of new works; but he has shown, with this recording, his whole-hearted understanding of the score and his supreme command of the orchestra. Unless we are sadly mistaken, we expect to see this symphony well represented in future orchestral programming.

Tchaikovsky Waltzes. RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 3-7" discs in box (♂V-WDM-1539) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-103) \$4.67.

Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64—Third movement.

Eugen Onegin—Waltz (Act II).

The Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a—Waltz of the Flowers.

The Swan Lake—Waltz.

The Sleeping Beauty—Waltz.

Fritz Reiner has chosen a number of Tchaikovsky tunes that anyone may enjoy and has played them in a most ingratiating manner. Dinner music *par excellence* splendidly performed and recorded!

Morton Gould Program. Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 3-7" discs in box (♂C-A-1009) \$3.95. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2190) \$4.

Morton Gould fans will probably go for this one in a big way—it contains a series of Gould arrangements of selections he often plays, including *The Donkey Serenade*, his own *Pavanne*, *Dark Eyes* and several other numbers.

Kodály: Dances from Galanta. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by L. G. Jochum. One side, and **Kodály: Psalmus Hungaricus, Op. 13** (Sung in German). Helmut Krebs (tenor) with Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7014) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

Gluck—arr. Mottl: *Ballet Suite*. German Philharmonic Orchestra of Prague conducted by Josef Keilberth. One side, and **Gluck: Frühlingsfeier** ("Spring Festival"). Berlin Mozart Boys Choir with the Chamber Orchestra of the German Opera House (Berlin). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7018) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

Grieg: Holberg Suite, Op. 40. Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. One side, and **Hanson: Concerto in G for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 36.** Rudolf Firkusny (piano) with the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4403) \$5.45.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

CONCERTO



Hanson: Concerto in G for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 36. Rudolf Firkusny (piano) with the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. One side, and **Grieg: Holberg Suite, Op. 40.** Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4403) \$5.45.

Howard Hanson is one of America's outstanding composers and music educators, and a great force in the presentation of American music. His symphonies, choral works, and opera *Merry Mount* represent a fine group of contemporary music. Dr. Hanson's *G major Piano Concerto* is his first work in this form, and was completed in 1948, on commission by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation. The first performance was by Firkusny with the composer conducting.

Although the composition is in four movements, it is short and it represents a marked tendency toward condensation. The influence of jazz rhythms and melodic patterns is apparent throughout its course. The first movement opens softly in the brass instruments, and the effect is rather similar to something from Sibelius. But the main body of the movement begins with a rapid, nervous theme in the piano which actually sets the pace of the whole work. We have listened to it twice through, and liked it both times. It does require a bit of concentration, but is not a difficult work to grasp. The second movement is scherzo-like, the third is a plaintive affair in E minor, while the finale is energetic for the most part, concluding with a masterly cyclic coda.

The performance of this concerto is undoubtedly authoritative, and beyond that it is mighty good. Hanson is a very fine conductor, and his soloist is a top rank pianist. The combination is unbeatable for this work and the results show it well. Hanson also shows his mettle in a reading of the Grieg *Holberg Suite*. This performance is touched with the charm, grace, and subtlety which the music requires. Where brightness and brilliance are in order, Hanson does not push the music too hard, a quality which many conductors of our day could emulate with great advantage. It all adds up to a grand performance of music which is lovely and enjoyable from first bar to last. The Eastman-Rochester Orchestra, by the way, plays very well, and the reproduction is fine. S.

Prokofiev: Concerto No. 5 in G for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 55. Alfred Brendel (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. One side, and **Prokofiev: Sonata No. 5 in C, Op. 38.** Hans Graf (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-527) \$5.95.

Prokofiev is by nature one thing, but he says he is another, and tries to be this other thing because he thinks he should be. He is, by nature, a lyricist; and if he were born and living his life in this or some other free country he would probably write music of great lyric beauty. As it is, he builds fences around himself to a given political pattern, and in so doing he squeezes his lyrical nature into another shape. The compromising ingredient which he mixes with his lyricism is mockery and grotesque buffoonery, which he describes as a Beethovenesque Scherzo-like ingredient. You may not agree with our opinion of this admittedly great contemporary composer, but his music does have a lyric quality ever so often, yet this is subjected to a hard and percussive pattern. The piano concerto here recorded, No. 5, is a clear example of the planned craftsmanship of Prokofiev. The symmetry, angular design, freedom from anything suggesting the sentimental, daring harmonic devices, and general over-all neatness are all in the foundation and the fabric of the work. For us, the music is more immediately enjoyable than the often played Third Concerto, if not as sensational. Those interested in Prokofiev and this sort of music will not want to miss this new recording, for besides a fresh new work, it is a recording of merit—a good performance well recorded.

The *Sonata No. 5* finds the lyric elements all but submerged in innovations which touch on atonality, strong rhythmic motor elements, and plenty of that acid percussiveness which hallmarks Prokofiev. It is a virtuoso piece of staggering demands requiring muscular endurance of a sort to discourage most recitalists. Hans Graf tackles it with conviction, and his rendition is admirable indeed. The piano tone is recorded very well. S.

Dvorák: Concerto in A minor, Op. 53. Nathan Milstein (violin) with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1537) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1147) \$5.72.

This is but the third recording to have been made of this concerto. A previous one by Kulenkampff with the Berlin Philharmonic, originally recorded by Telefunken, is available on Capitol LP (*CLP-8052). Kulenkampff's reading is not as dramatic and expressive as the new one by Milstein. Much of the dreamy and pastoralish atmosphere of the German recording is replaced by a sturdier and more persuasive feeling in the American recording. We would estimate that most folks will prefer Milstein for the greater depth and more searching reading he gives the Dvorák *Concerto*. The reproduction

of the present set is very good, yielding an exceptionally mellow tone without being tubby. Dorati and the Minneapolis group render a well-adjusted accompaniment, a shade on the mild side, but considerate and well adjusted.

We would like to hear the original draft of this work to compare it with the finally published version. After composing the concerto, Dvorák sent it to the great violinist Joachim (to whom the work was dedicated). Joachim suggested so many changes that it was necessary to revise the solo part completely. After making the indicated alterations, he was obliged to wait two years—it took Joachim that long to make up his mind before expressing an opinion. Then, for the benefit of Simrock, the publisher, Dvorák made a few more changes in the finale. We would wager that its original form was for the most part better than the final edition, for the work as a whole seems too distilled and super-refined. It is, nevertheless, a gracious piece of music which anyone can enjoy—and too few ever hear it to try.

S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Serenade in D, Op. 8. Joseph Fuchs (violin); Lillian Fuchs (viola); Leonard Rose (violoncello). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7506) \$3.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in G minor for 'Cello and Piano, Op. 5, No. 2. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 4 in C, Op. 102, No. 1.** Nikolai Graudan (violoncello) and Joanna Graudan (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6770) \$5.95.

Music of a light nature from the hand of Beethoven is rarely heard although he composed many works in this vein. It is entirely possible that his stature as one of the greatest composers has rendered his lesser works too "frivolous" to consider. However, it is our belief that it leads to popular misconceptions about composers when some of their work is withheld (for one reason or another) from the public. If it were not for a work like *The Nutcracker Suite*, Tchaikovsky might have been considered a thoroughly somber fellow. We could cite other examples but we are here concerned with a charming serenade, in many moods, by the Mighty Beethoven. Beginning with a little march, presumably to accompany the players to milady's window, the music then presents tender professions of love; a dance follows and then there is a display of musicianship just to show that they are not mere amateurs. The work concludes with a polka, theme-and-variations, and a return to the march of the opening.

The two sonatas for violoncello and piano provide contrast even in the limited frame provided by two instruments. The earlier sonata, *Op. 5, No. 2*, was designed chiefly as a showpiece and most certainly requires virtuoso playing; we have it here from Nikolai and Joanna Graudan. The other

sonata, *Op. 102, No. 1*, comes from the period when Beethoven was well-established and did not feel compelled to "impress" his patrons. It is music with considerably more depth and sincerity than the former work but, taken together, these sonatas contribute a further understanding of the many-sided Beethoven.

Franck: Sonata in A for Violin and Piano. Lola Bobesco (violin) and Jacques Genty (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-326) \$4.95.

Franck: Sonata in A for 'Cello and Piano. One and one-half sides, and **Debussy: Sonata No. 1 for 'Cello and Piano.** Marcel Hubert (violoncello) and Harold Dart (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-110) \$5.45.

The two discs listed above present the music lover with a choice. The Franck *Sonata* in each case is the same musical composition. It is most frequently played as a violin-and-piano sonata but the notes printed on the Allegro folder indicate that there is authoritative evidence that César Franck wrote it originally for 'cello and piano. It seems that before the work was given to the public, the great Belgian violinist, Eugene Ysaye, saw it and wanted to perform it; it was dedicated to him and he played it with great success. At any rate, now we can judge for ourselves.

To our mind, at least, the choice would seem to rest on which instrument one prefers. We, personally, find the 'cello rather somber and too dark-toned for protracted listening and so our vote goes to the violin—original version notwithstanding. The Debussy *Sonata* accompanying the Franck work on Allegro further bears out our feeling, re the 'cello: it is undoubtedly one of the least-distinguished works by Debussy that we have heard; we wonder whether the violin would do anything for it.

Brahms: Sonata No. 1 in G for Violin and Piano, Op. 78 ("Regen"). Isaac Stern (violin) and Alexander Zakin (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2193) \$4.

This is the first LP recording of this lovely and romantic Brahms sonata which is known as the "Rain Sonata" because of the seeming little April shower that is heard in the last movement. Stern and Zakin give a brilliant performance but it was spoiled for us because of the many annoying clicks that were heard on the sample disc sent us. Regular stock records may be all right but we suggest that you hear this one before you purchase it.

CHORAL



Kodály: Psalmus Hungaricus, Op. 13 (Sung in German). Helmut Krebs (tenor) with Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **Kodály: Dances from Galánta.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by L. G. Jochum. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7014) \$5.95.

In 1923 Zoltan Kodály was commissioned to

write a work celebrating the 50th anniversary of the union of the rival cities of Buda and Pesth. 1923 was also shortly after the signing of the ill-starred Treaty of Versailles which (among a lot of other things) made Hungary a free nation; it was against this background of hope, freedom and rising liberalism that the *Psalmus Hungaricus* was written. The text is a rather "free" rendition of the 55th Psalm by the 16th century Hungarian poet, Miklos Vég. Kodály set this "Hungarian" Psalm to music that is strongly nationalistic in feeling, if somewhat uneven musically. Helmut Krebs sings the solo portions earnestly but with little beauty of tone. The Chorus of Radio Berlin sings lustily and sonorously and the orchestra seconds their efforts. Arthur Rother keeps his forces under control and makes the most of all the effects with which the score is packed.

The other side contains a rousing performance of the *Dances from Galanta*. Galanta is a small Hungarian market town where Kodály spent several years as a child. Five varied dances comprise the set and are brilliantly scored for a large orchestra. They evidence typically Hungarian melodies and are superbly played by the Radio Berlin Orchestra under L. G. Jochum.

Urania has supplied good recording, the text of the *Psalmus*, and intelligent notes by Dr. Wm. B. Ober. The record is interesting, off the beaten track (although the *Dances* have been recorded previously by Decca) and is worthy of investigation. W.

Monteverdi: Salve Regina and Monteverdi: Magnificat Secondo. One side, and **Verdi: Ave Maria and Verdi: Laudi alla Vergine and Verdi: Pater Noster** (Sung in Latin). Philadelphia Choral Ensemble directed by James Fleetwood. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3019) \$5.95.

Allegro Records has hit on an interesting coupling with this LP disc. Claudio Monteverdi was one of the first great Italian composers and Giuseppe Verdi was one of the last. The works chosen, however, do not do justice to Verdi for he was not in his *metier* as a composer of religious music (the *Requiem* notwithstanding; it is pure opera) and consequently the works chosen, while interesting, are not in any way representative of his genius. Monteverdi, on the other hand, while almost the father of opera, achieved almost equal fame as a writer of liturgical music, although he resented the time he had to spend on writing Masses and music for special services.

The *Salve Regina* and *Magnificat* are prime examples of Monteverdi's art. They sound remote to present day ears, but this quality has an undeniable charm. For all his disinclination to write church music, Monteverdi poured considerable feeling and expression into these two works. The three Verdi selections are *Ave Maria* and *Laudi alla Vergine*, numbers 1

and 3 from his last published work *Quattro pezzi sacra* and a *Pater Noster* based on a selection from Dante. The *Laudi alla Vergine* is also based on Dante, being a portion of the last canto from the *Paradiso*. The *Ave Maria* is somewhat of an experiment—using as it does a *cantus firmus*, which is a scale with unusual intervals and is referred to as *la scala enigmatica*. The scale alone has been recorded, very considerably, for identification purposes.

The Philadelphia Choral Ensemble sings with accuracy, spirit and style. The soloists, Dorothy Moss, James Sefton and Philip Steinhoff are more than adequate. James Fleetwood handles the project in a thoroughly artistic fashion, making the record of interest to all music lovers—not only specialists. Allegro's recording is excellent. W.

Gluck: Frühlingsfeier ("Spring Festival"). Berlin Mozart Boys Choir with the Chamber Orchestra of the German Opera House (Berlin). One side, and **Gluck—arr. Mottl: Ballet Suite.** German Philharmonic Orchestra of Prague conducted by Josef Keilberth. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7018) \$5.95.

Frühlingsfeier is a short work for chorus and soprano solo. It comes originally from one of those dozens of "dead" pieces composed for a specific event and performed but once. It was composed in 1767, after Orfeo and before Alceste, in honor of the birth of a child to the Grand Duchess of Tuscany. It was a typically florid eulogy common in 18th century celebrations for the aristocracy. The present mating, for practical performance, of this Gluck music to a text by the famous bardic poet and friend of Gluck, Klopstock, is most fortunate, as is the use here of a boys' chorus and a boy soprano to replace the castrato of the original. The orchestral overture (*sinfonia*) leads directly into the first chorus; duets (here taken by the groups of boy sopranos), soprano solo and larger choral numbers follow without pause. A very long and impossibly difficult, for today's voice, solo scene for the soprano is mercifully omitted. The music is fresh, simple, and pleasant. It is performed with commendable spirit and accuracy. The boy soprano soloist just about gets around his arduous chore, but the rest is quite even.

The famous Felix Mottl arrangement of excerpts from Gluck's music which is known as the *Ballet Suite* appears for the first time on LP discs. This is music of exceeding charm, being the choicest bits of Gluck in most appropriate orchestral dress—a masterpiece of good taste on Mottl's part. It is accorded a rendition worthy of the music by a good German orchestra under Keilberth, who is doing some distinguished conducting on the Continent these days. Some of his work is finding its way on discs and we note that most of it is very good. This *Ballet Suite* is an example of his best efforts. The reproduction is excellent. S.

OPERA



Mozart: *Le Nozze di Figaro* K. 492 ("The Marriage of Figaro") (complete). (Sung in Italian). Alda Noni, Gabriella Gatti (sopranos); Miti Truccato Pace, Jolanda Gardino (mezzo-sopranos); Angelo Mercuriali (tenor); Sesto Bruscantini (bass-baritone); Italo Tajo, Fernando Corena (bassos); with the EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Fernando Previtali. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1219) \$17.85.

Le Nozze di Figaro is the first of Mozart's undisputedly great operas. It is not only a flawless work; it is also a conception of such prodigious genius that it has revolutionized all our ideas of "opera." *Figaro* is an "opera" to be sure; but more important, it is true music drama, for in it Mozart creates living characters by means of music. In view of the complexities of the score and the high degree of musicianship required to do it justice one need not be surprised that many performances nowadays are carelessly prepared—it takes time, trouble and artistic conscience to make *Le Nozze di Figaro* sparkle and come to life. All three of these have been contributed generously to this present performance.

The cast is impressive. Gabriella Gatti is a superb Contessa; Alda Noni a vivacious Susanna and Jolanda Gardino a dulcet-voiced Cherubino. In addition they form as perfect a triumvirate of singing actresses as could be desired. They sing with style and polish and show a willingness and understanding in the great ensembles that is as admirable as it is musicianly. Among the three male leads, vocal and dramatic honors are also evenly divided. Italo Tajo is a clever and knowing Figaro; Sesto Bruscantini as Almaviva could scarcely be improved upon; and Fernando Corena's Dr. Bartolo is beautifully portrayed. In the minor roles are such outstanding artists as Cristiano Dalamangas as Antonio, Miti Truccato Pace the Marcelinna, and Angelo Mercuriali as the suave Don Basilio.

The guiding genius of the performance is Fernando Previtali. His ability to grasp and comprehend the subtleties of the score is phenomenal, and throughout the entire work his sure beat and perfect sense of tempo provide the polish that makes the production memorable. The members of the orchestra, which has been appropriately reduced in size, play like angels. A harpsichord is used for the recitatives, completing as artistic and satisfying a performance as can be heard on records.

There is only one blemish, one lapse from artistic integrity. Unaccountably, the great recitative and aria for the Count *Vedrò mentr'io* has been omitted although the small fourth act aria for Barbarina *L'ho perduta, me meschina*, almost invariably cut out, has been included. It is by no means a fair exchange.

The present set more than favorably compares

with the older Glyndebourne set promised for Fall re-issue on LP by RCA Victor. The men in Cetra's recording are equal to the old and the women are far superior. Previtali matches Busch note for note. This present set should stand high in all lists of the ten best recorded performances of this or any other year. It is, beyond a doubt, the greatest artistic success Cetra has yet achieved! W.

Gershwin: *Porgy and Bess* (complete). Camilla Williams, Inez Matthews (sopranos); Avon Long (tenor); Lawrence Winters, Warren Coleman (baritones); J. Rosamund Johnson Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-162) \$17.35.

To many, "Porgy and Bess" is only the source of a few songs that continue to intrigue the public enough to be heard now and again, such as: *Summertime*; *I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'*; and *It Ain't Necessarily So*. Recorded here for the first time in its entirety, we now have an opportunity to hear George Gershwin's greatest contribution to American music and to the theatre in all its vivid color and excitement. Termed a "folk opera" by the composer himself, it is that and more. Although Gershwin used the folk idiom throughout, he did not employ actual traditional negro spirituals or other material of the kind. In his own words, he avoided using such native material because he "wanted the music to be all of one piece"—something that would not have been possible, for instance, with the standard spirituals, etc.

Beautifully sung by the principals, with a chorus rich in color and an orchestral score that is still fresh and vivid, "Porgy and Bess" has at last come into its own as one of the important items of Americana. The use of realistic sound effects in this production adds immeasurably to the over-all effect, since we must rely on our ears alone to "see" the action which is, at times, highly dramatic. In addition, this album includes *The Buzzard Song*, which was eliminated from the original production because the composer decided that the role of Porgy was too strenuous and that some cutting had to be done. With this in mind Gershwin removed additional material of about fifteen minutes duration in all. Those of our readers familiar with the plot know that the role of Porgy, who is a cripple, is sung and acted from a kneeling position in most of the scenes—something not easily accomplished.

There are many memorable scenes in this "folk opera" besides the familiar ones in which *Summertime*, *A Woman is a Sometime Thing*, and the other songs previously mentioned are used: there is the wake scene with *My Man's Gone Now*; the Kittiwah Island episode and *What You Want with Bess?*; and the scenes incorporating the various cries of the vendors—the honey man, the strawberry woman and the crab man.

We cannot judge the appeal this set will have for the majority of music lovers. We do know, however, that there is a goodly section of them that

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
♢ indicates 45 rpm.

knows and admires "Porgy and Bess." To them we say that here is a definitive edition of a work that has become a classic in its own time. A complete libretto accompanies this album. H.

Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci (complete). (Sung in Italian). Lucine Amara (soprano); Richard Tucker, Thomas Hayward (tenors); Giuseppe Valdengo, Clifford Harvuot (baritones); with Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Fausto Cleva. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-113) \$12.25.

For the sixth in its series of Metropolitan Opera Association productions, Columbia offers that hardy perennial, Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*. It must be accounted by all odds the best of the series for, with the exception of one casting error, it is a fine performance, superbly recorded.

Leoncavallo's stirring little tragedy has long been a favorite, not only because of Caruso's and later Martinelli's association with the role of Canio but because of its intensity and virtually perfect form. There is no superfluous tissue; every note is pregnant with meaning, and the whole work, in addition to being authentic (Leoncavallo's father sat as presiding judge in the real case from which the plot is drawn), it is extraordinarily good theatre.

In the role of Canio, Richard Tucker sings well but, ironically, it is the very beauty and sweetness of his voice that prevents, to some extent, his becoming a completely convincing figure. He seems unable to get inside the character and while a stage performance might add verisimilitude to his interpretation, on records it can be judged as vocally competent but dramatically weak. Giuseppe Valdengo is a fine Tonio; his singing of the *Prologo* is thrilling despite his obviously worn top notes. Lucine Amara is a virtually perfect Nedda. Her fresh, youthful soprano, which is used with intelligence and good taste, is capable of a wide range of expression and coloring. Her performance has distinction and charm. In the minor roles of Beppe and Silvio, Thomas Hayward and Clifford Harvuot are satisfactory although Mr. Harvuot has some trying moments in his duet with Miss Amara.

Fausto Cleva is much more at home in this music than he was in *Faust* and turns in a blameless, if not a memorable, performance. The chorus, under Kurt Adler, sings with precision and good effect. By and large the production is a good one, with moments of real fervor and excitement, but there are also passages where the full effect has not been realized. W.

VOCAL

Berlioz: Les Nuits d'Été, Op. 7. Suzanne Danco (soprano) with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra conducted by Thor Johnson. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-407) \$5.95.

In a first complete recording of unusual beauty,

Suzanne Danco and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, offer Berlioz' Song Cycle *Les Nuits d'Été*. These beautiful and original songs are almost entirely unknown today, but this sterling performance and recording should not only correct the lack of knowledge concerning this music but will also have a salutary effect on many who only know the Berlioz of the *Symphonie Fantastique*. The six songs in the cycle are: (1) *Villanelle*, a simple and lovely country song; (2) *La Spectre de la Rose*, a relatively long and complex song, very characteristic of Berlioz' subtle melodic expression; (3) *Sur les lagunes*, a barcarolle; (4) *L'Absence*, "one of the finest love songs in existence" (W. J. Turner); (5) *Au Cimetière (Clair de lune)*, a melancholy melody of exquisite beauty and (6) *L'Île inconnue*, a perfect gem of a song, sophisticated and ironic.

Berlioz' melody, it might be pointed out, is unique. To modern ears, accustomed to melodies of two, four or six bars, these tunes of Berlioz', running fourteen, sixteen and even twenty bars long will sound strange. In fact, in Berlioz' own words, his melodies are often on so large a scale that "an immature or short-sighted musical vision may not clearly distinguish their form—shallow musicians may find them so unlike the funny little things they call melodies that they can not bring themselves to give the same name to both."

Suzanne Danco sings the work in superb fashion. Her task is not an easy one, for the range required is formidable and a musical intelligence of the highest order is necessary. She comes through, however, with flying colors on both counts. Thor Johnson and the orchestra second her efforts brilliantly. London's *ffrr* recording never sounded better, making the record a truly remarkable achievement, artistically and technically. The only blemish is the patronizing tone of Norman Sackling's notes on the record jacket. The space could have much better been given over to Théophile Gautier's poems which Berlioz used as texts. W.

Songs of Beethoven. (Sung in German). Ralph Herbert (baritone) accompanied by Frederick Waldman (piano). 1-10" disc (*AL-AL-88) \$4.45.

Gellert Lieder, Op. 48.

Adelaide, Op. 46.

Mailed.

Wonne der Wehmuth, Op. 83.

Neue Liebe, neues Leben, Op. 75.

Beethoven, as a song writer, is looked upon, in some quarters, with disdain; and while the larger forms become him better, this collection of *Lieder* should do a lot to correct certain erroneous impressions. The *Gellert Lieder* consist of six songs, the most famous of which is the wonderful *Die Erbe Gottes aus der Natur*. There are five others in the group, however, and all of them are excellent. The texts were taken from a collection of poems, *Geistliche Oden und Lieder*, by Christian Furchtegott Gellert, published in 1757. These "odes and songs" were ranked

among the finest religious poems of the time, and they especially appealed to Beethoven for the pantheistic vein that runs through them. The other side is concerned with love songs, generally unhappy (which needn't surprise one) based on texts by Matthäus and Goethe. The famous *Adelaide* is included as well as *Wonne der Wemuth*; *Mailed*; and *Neue Liebe, neues Leben*.

Ralph Herbert sings all these varied songs in magnificent fashion. His is a large voice, used with intelligence and expression. He has the enviable ability to convey his feeling for the text by coloring his tones; and this, coupled with his excellent diction, stamps him as one of the better *lieder* singers. His accompanist, Frederic Waldman, is also an accomplished musician; between them they turn in a well-nigh perfect performance.

Allegro's recording ranges from fair to good, the chief defect being a "wow" in the piano tone. Despite this rather common recording fault, the disc is enthusiastically endorsed. W.

Songs and Arias of Scarlatti and Handel. (Sung in Italian and English). Mordecai Bauman (baritone) accompanied by John Reymes King (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3018) \$5.95.

Loewe: Scottish Border Ballads. Emile Renan (baritone) accompanied by Emilia Mitrani (piano). 1-10" disc (*AL-AL-108) \$4.45.

Baroque Music is featured on the first of these two Allegro discs. Alessandro Scarlatti, the famous father of a famous son, was one of the developers of early opera and founder of the Neapolitan School of the 18th century. In fact, Scarlatti, as Edw. J. Dent remarks, "is the founder of that musical language which . . . served the classical composers for the expression of their thoughts down to the close of the Viennese period." A representative selection of arias and *scenas* is here recorded and includes *Pensieri*; *Difesa non ha*; *O cessate di piagarmi*; *Son tutto duolo* and *Già il sole del Gange* all written to those extravagant 17th and early 18th century lyrics that are so full of fire, love, pain and thoughts of death. The reverse side of this record contains the recitatives and arias from two Handel oratorios "Samson" (*The good we wish for . . . Thy glorious deeds*) and "Judas Maccabaeus" (*I feel the Diety within . . . Arm, arm ye brave!*) plus four arias: *Affani del pensier* from "Ottone"; *Ah, mio core* from "Alcina"; and *More sweet is that name* and *Leave me, loathsome light* both from "Semele." Mordecai Bauman's qualifications for this music are those of the mind rather than of the body. His style and feeling for the texts is of a high order while his voice is a good but not exceptional baritone. His accompanist in all selections is John Reymes King who uses a harpsichord to great effect in the Scarlatti music, but who sounds out of place and incongruous in the Handel items. The recording is good.

The other Allegro release, devoted to three Bal-

lads by Loewe, is not too good. Loewe has not fared too well on LP discs; the other record devoted to his work (issued by London) was a distinct disappointment (TNR June '51). Emile Renan, an American baritone, sings in a passable but undistinguished fashion three of Loewe's Scottish settings: *Tom the Rhymer*; *Edward*; and *Archibald Douglas*. The texts are in English based on the original Scottish ballad rather than in Loewe's original German. The recording is only fair. A definitive recording of the Loewe Ballads is yet to come; and this reviewer, for one, sincerely hopes it will be soon and that it will include the superlative *Erlkönig*. W.

Gems from Sigmund Romberg Shows (Vol. IV).

Soloists with the Robert Shaw Chorale and Sigmund Romberg and his Orchestra. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1529) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-93) \$4.67.

It is quite obvious that Sigmund Romberg's music is here to stay. RCA Victor has just released the fourth in a series called *Gems from Sigmund Romberg Shows*. We have no doubt that his songs will go on living long after the shows themselves are forgotten. Sigmund Romberg and his Orchestra, together with the soloists and the Robert Shaw Chorale, present *Close as Pages in a Book*, *April Snow*, and *Big Back Yard* from "Up in Central Park"; *Serenade* from "The Student Prince"; and *Something New Is in My Heart* and *Just Once Around the Clock* from "May Wine."

Dvorák: Mährische Klänge, Op. 32 (Strains from Moravia). (Sung in German). Marta Fuchs (soprano) and Margarete Klose (contralto) accompanied by Michael Raucheisen (piano). 1-10" disc (*UR-URLP-5002) \$4.75.

Dvorák's *Mährische Klänge Op. 32* (Strains from Moravia) is the second of two such sets he wrote. The first, a set of four duets for soprano and tenor, made such a hit with, of all people, Brahms, that the publisher, Simrock, ordered the present work which consists of twelve duets based on poems taken from a collection entitled *Moravian National Songs*. They are not folk songs but are, beyond a shadow of a doubt, written in that spirit. They were published in 1878.

Margarete Klose and Marta Fuchs sing them excellently; the dark-voiced Klose making an ideal contrast and foil for Mme. Fuchs' lyric soprano. Michael Raucheisen provides accompaniments that leave nothing to be desired. Outstanding in the set are *Der kleine Acker* and *Wasser und Weinen*, both of which are characteristic not only of Dvorák at his best but also of his native land.

Despite the many excellencies of the record and music, however, the duets begin to pall after ten minutes or so. It is obviously music for specialists and relatively limited in its appeal. Urania has supplied good recording and a booklet giving the German texts and a somewhat stilted English translation. W.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

Coward: Vocal Gems from "Ace of Clubs." Soloists with the Cambridge Theatre Orchestra conducted by Mantovani. 2-12" discs (V-C-7796/7) \$3.16.

Coward: Ace of Clubs—Josephine. Noel Coward (vocal) with the Cambridge Theatre Orchestra conducted by Mantovani. One side, and **Coward: Ace of Clubs**—Three Juvenile Delinquents. Soloists with the Cambridge Theatre Orchestra conducted by Mantovani. 1-10" disc (V-B-9946) \$1.05.

Noel Coward has a tremendous following here in America and thus it is very likely that many of our readers will be glad to know that the records listed above are available in this country—they arrived in a recent shipment from England. The first item is a pair of discs that contain selections from Coward's London musical "Ace of Clubs." The recordings were made by members of the original London cast.

The second item contains the amusing *Three Juvenile Delinquents*, sung by the originators of this zany number, and Mr. Coward's own rendition of the hit of the show, *Josephine*. *Josephine* is sung by Pat Kirkwood on the second "Gems" record but the *Three Juvenile Delinquents* is not included in that group of selections.

Negro Spirituals. Todd Duncan (baritone) accompanied by Carroll Hollister (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3022) \$5.95.

In a very welcome record, Allegro presents the distinguished American baritone, Todd Duncan, in a group of negro spirituals. The selection of material is a happy one, for included are such prime favorites as *Nobody knows the trouble I've seen*; *All God's chillun got wings*; *Deep River*; and *Swing Low Sweet Chariot*; as well as the equally fine, but lesser known *Roll Jord'n Roll*; *Clim'in' Jacob's Ladder*; *Every time I feel the Spirit and Witness*. In all there are eighteen spirituals—every one a gem and each is treated with the utmost care.

Todd Duncan, who will be remembered as the young man who created the role of Porgy in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, has come a long way since that eventful night and is now familiar to audiences in Europe as well as in Australia and New Zealand. His sure sense of artistry and musicianship serve him well in singing this varied group of spirituals.

Allegro's recording is excellent. W.

Berg: Der Wein (Concert Aria). Charlotte Boerner (soprano) with the Janssen Symphony Orchestra conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8150) \$3.98.

For those interested in the Schönberg school of "new music" the present work by Alban Berg, one of Schönberg's most devoted pupils and disciples, will be of supreme interest. It is recorded here for the first time; and while the work is unfamiliar to us, it would seem that it has been given a very good performance by able artists. While it is listed as a "Concert Aria," it is really a symphony

in one movement with a solo voice as an integral part—it is in three sections: "The Soul of the Wine," "The Wine of Lovers" and "The Wine of the Solitary." The text is from three poems by Baudelaire translated into German by Stefan Georg. *Der Wein* dates from 1929 and was a preliminary study for Berg's opera *Lulu*, which work was not quite completed when Berg died in 1935.

We think that we have written enough to identify this unique Berg composition, and for those who are interested we would like to call attention to a short lecture on *Der Wein* by Alfred Frankenstein, the distinguished music critic of the San Francisco Chronicle, which occupies the second side of the present disc. This recorded lecture has been purposely placed on the second side because it is felt that the music should be heard first and the explanation of it heard afterwards. R.

Concert Favorites. (Sung in Italian, German and English). Joseph Schmidt (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9528) \$5.85.

Songs of Old Vienna. (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9526) \$5.85.

The old, and the term old is used advisedly, famous discs of two fabulous tenors have been transferred, in the main successfully, to LP discs for the benefit of a new generation of music lovers. The first of these tenors, the extraordinary Joseph Schmidt, is presented in twelve "Concert Favorites" in which all the ringing high notes of his unusually large voice are displayed. The songs run the gamut from the very Italian *Mattinata* and *Santa Lucia* through the arrangement of two Strauss waltzes *Vienna Bonbons* and *Donaueibchen* to the frankly "jazzy" (vintage 1930) *Today is the happiest day of my life*. The Italian songs are very well sung, and in all the selections there is a spirit and an obvious enjoyment of the task in hand that many modern singers would do well to emulate. Certainly his tragic death in 1943 in a Swiss internment camp deprived the world of a singer who was not only the possessor of a magnificent voice but also a genuine artist.

Richard Tauber, not so long dead (1948), was another beloved artist who, although he did not have the phenomenal voice of Schmidt, was highly regarded as an exponent of *lieder* and popular Viennese music. He was, in addition, an operatic tenor of high calibre. Perhaps he could best be defined as an Austrian John McCormack. In this collection such famous and popular songs as *Vienna*, *City of My Dreams*; *Waltz Dream*; *Come Gypsy*; *Tales from the Vienna Woods* and *Gypsy Moon* are included. One only wonders how Rossini's very Italianate *salterello La Danza* became, for purposes of this collection, a "Song of Old Vienna." All the music is beautifully sung, as one expects from Tauber; and here, as in the case of Joseph Schmidt,

the artist conveys to the listener his obvious enjoyment and love of singing.

Both discs are thoroughly enjoyable while admittedly of little musical value. As a nostalgic souvenir of a time now vanished in the wake of the Second World War, they are invaluable. W.

French Songs of the 16th and 17th Centuries.

One side, and **English Songs of the 17th Century.** Hugues Cuenod (tenor) accompanied by Hermann Leeb (lute). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5085) \$5.95.

M. Hugues Cuenod continues his explorations in 16th and 17th century music, this time working his way North and, in his usual impeccable style, presenting songs from France and England. As in his previous disc (TNR June '51) his accompanist is Hermann Leeb.

From France there are seven songs by five composers along with an extremely interesting *Suite en Re* by Robert de Visée. Among the songs are two settings of Psalms: number 130 by Pierre Certon and number 50 by Adrian le Roy. The others, fittingly enough, are love songs, both sad and happy. All have the characteristic remote and impersonal quality associated with this type of music that is all the more entrancing because of its strangeness.

The English songs are much more earthy and provide an excellent contrast to the somewhat sentimental French works. Included are two songs by the inimitable John Dowland: *Flow my tears* and *I saw my lady weep*. John Bartlet is represented by three songs, including one with a quite modern title, *What thing is Love*. The two remaining songs are Pilkington's *Rest sweet nymphs* and Morley's *It was a lover and his lass*. Mr. Leeb's solo contribution to this side is a *Fantasia* by Dowland, magnificently played.

Cuenod's obvious gifts in the direction of old music are well known to most music lovers. His voice, style and intimate manner add much to the music and make his performances among the finest to be found on records. The lute accompaniments lend the proper atmosphere to the songs and M. Cuenod is fortunate indeed to have an artist of Mr. Leeb's stature as his accompanist.

Westminster's recording is at its usual high level of quality and they have thoughtfully included a pamphlet giving the texts of the songs in addition to well prepared notes by David Randolph. W.

Lehar: Zigeunerliebe ("Gypsy Love") (complete operetta). (Sung in German). Rosl Seegers, Ilse Mentzel (sopranos); Adi Appelt, Herbert Ernst Groh (tenors); Carlheinz Karel (baritone); with the Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Otto Dobrindt. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-205) \$11.90.

Central European operettas have a peculiar charm. Such masterpieces as *The Merry Widow* and *The Count of Luxembourg* along with Strauss' immortal contributions form a group of compositions that are

at once unique and universally appealing. Lehar's *Gypsy Love* is an outstanding member of this select company and will be welcomed by the many admirers of this type of music.

The cast assembled is one that is adequate if not overly distinguished. The leading tenor, Herbert Ernst Groh, still has quite a bit of voice left, but his high notes are achieved by pushing, something he did not have to do some ten years ago. Rosl Seegers and Ilse Mentzel are average light sopranos equal to all the demands placed on them. Adi Appelt displays the same mannerisms here as in the *Urania 1001 Nacht*; i.e., a "cuteness" and a tendency to over-bid. Carlheinz Karel is a run-of-the-mill baritone, capable if uninspired. Otto Dobrindt and the orchestra of Radio Berlin romp through the melodious score with a degree of spirit and brio.

The recording is good, the surfaces quiet. W.

Songs of Victor Herbert. Eleanor Steber (soprano) with Percy Faith and his Orchestra and Chorus. 4-7" discs in box (øC-A-1011) \$5.10. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2192) \$4.

Undoubtedly medleys of Victor Herbert songs are always good sellers and the public never seems to get enough of them. Hardly a month goes by without a new recording of a group of Mr. Herbert's selections. This month Eleanor Steber, with the aid of a chorus and orchestra under the direction of Percy Faith, presents a series of them in a quite attractive manner. The songs are *Sweethearts*; *Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life*; *I'm Falling in Love with Someone*; *Thine Alone*; *Kiss Me Again*; *A Kiss in the Dark*; *When You're Away*; and *Italian Street Song*.

Beloved Schubert Songs. (Sung in German). Marian Anderson (contralto) accompanied by Franz Rupp (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1530) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-98) \$4.67.

Music lovers everywhere are aware of the excellence of Marian Anderson's renditions of Schubert songs, and we can promise them that they will not be disappointed with the recordings to be found in the group released by RCA Victor this month. As usual Miss Anderson has the intelligent and sympathetic support of her accompanist, Franz Rupp. The selections are: *Liebesbotschaft*; *Der Erlkönig*; *Ständchen*; *Gretchen am Spinnrade*; *Der Tod und das Mädchen*; *Die Forelle*; and *Ave Maria*.

Fireside Favorites. Blanch Thebom (mezzo-soprano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1541) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-104) \$4.67.

While Miss Thebom was in England she made a number of recordings for HMV and this month RCA Victor has grouped some of them under the title "Fireside Favorites." If you are interested in such selections, you will find them beautifully sung and superbly recorded. The selections are: *My Old Kentucky Home*; *Lead, Kindly Light*; *One Sweetly*

Solemn Thought; Mighty Lak' a Rose; Homing; Calm as the Night; The Rosary; and Trees.

Songs of the Prairie. James Melton (tenor) with the RCA Victor Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Frank Black. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1535) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-101) \$4.67.

James Melton with the assistance of a good chorus and orchestra presents a half-dozen cowboy songs in a quite attractive manner. They are *The Last Round-Up; Home on the Range; Don't Fence Me In; Empty Saddles; Riders in the Sky; and Allá en el Rancho Grande.*

PIANO

Moussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition. Ella Goldstein (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1410) \$5.95.

The Mighty Five. Mikhail Sheyne (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-99) \$5.45.

Balakirev: *Islamey (An Oriental Fantasy).*

Rimsky-Korsakov: (6) *Variations of the Theme B-A-C-H, Op. 10.*

Novelette, Op. 11, No. 2.

Cui: *Canzonetta.*

Etude-Fantasia, Op. 52, No. 4.

Borodin: *Intermezzo.*

Serenade.

Moussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition*—selections.

This pair of discs contains much Russian music for pianoforte. Of particular importance to us was Ella Goldstein's superb performance of Moussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. We know that there are already LP versions of this work by Katchen and Horowitz but we can see why Concert Hall decided to release the present recording. To our mind Miss Goldstein surely rates with these fine artists in the rendition of this composition. It would not surprise us at all if many discerning music lovers would prefer her version. She has been accorded as fine piano reproduction as we have ever heard.

We cannot become so enthusiastic about Mikhail Sheyne's recordings on the *Allegro* disc. This disc contains much showy music and Mr. Sheyne isn't at all bashful about playing to the hilt. For those who like spectacular piano playing this record should be just the thing. The piano reproduction is very fine.

Liszt: (2) Legendes. One side, and **Liszt: Années de Pèlerinage.** Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LP-315) \$5.95.

Liszt: Sonata in B minor. One side, and **Liszt: Sonetto del Petrarca No. 104** and **Liszt: St. François d'Assise—La predication aux oiseaux** and **Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12 in C-sharp minor.** Leonard Pennario (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8136) \$4.98.

As there is not very much Liszt keyboard music

available on LP discs, these two excellent records are very welcome. The first is by the well-known pianist, Wilhelm Kempff—a fine artist who has made numerous highly regarded recordings during the last three decades. The second disc contains recordings by the young American pianist, Leonard Pennario, whose fame has grown rapidly since his appearance at Carnegie Hall and on the famous "Telephone Hour" radio broadcast. Limited space does not permit our going into these recordings in detail but we can assure those interested in Liszt that the performances are of a high calibre and the reproduction most satisfactory.

Chopin: (24) Preludes, Op. 28. Claudio Arrau (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4420) \$5.45.

Chopin: (4) Ballades. Earl Wild (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1401) \$5.95.

Lovers of Chopin's music will, we are very sure, join us in welcoming this splendid recording of the twenty-four Preludes by that fine Chopin interpreter, Claudio Arrau. However, we can see no particular reason for the recording of the Chopin Ballades on a 12-inch LP disc at \$5.95 by Earl Wild, when a highly satisfactory version by Robert Casadesu is available on a Columbia 10-inch LP disc at \$4. We often think that record publishers must live in a vacuum entirely oblivious to what is going on in the record industry around them.

"Meet the Composer." Béla Bartók plays his own works. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4419) \$5.45.

Columbia continues with its series of "Meet the Composer" with this disc containing recordings by the distinguished Hungarian composer, Béla Bartók. It contains thirty-five selections from Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*, which is a set of one hundred fifty-three short pieces for the piano student. These begin with comparatively easy studies and continue with those for more advanced pupils. This series is not only a graded piano-method but a fine example of models of composition in the field of contemporary music. The present disc is primarily for the student of music. It is not one to be placed on the phonograph simply for the enjoyment of the music that it contains. In listening to it one must use more than his ear; he must continually use his mind.

Mozart: Sonata in D for Two Pianos, K. 448. One side, and **Mozart: Andante con Variazione in G, K. 501** and **J. C. Bach: Sonata in G for Two Pianos.** Paul Badura-Skoda and Jeorg Demus (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5069) \$5.95.

Mozart: Sonata in B-flat, K. 358 and **Mozart: Sonata in D, K. 381** and **Mozart: Sonata in G, K. 357.** Paul Badura-Skoda and Jeorg Demus (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5060) \$5.95.

We have always been grateful that Mozart had a sister. Had this not been the case, we might never have had all the delightful two-piano works that he

composed for their concert tours. Some of the compositions were actually for four hands at one piano but for our purpose (which is enjoyment of the music) we consider them all for two pianos. Paul Badura-Skoda and Jeorg Demus display a virtuosity which is as thrilling as it is astounding—especially when one considers that most of what is being played is coming from one piano and the dexterity required to not get in each other's way is a talent in itself.

Either of these discs would do nicely in any record library. If we were to make a choice, we would select the first listed above because J. C. Bach is also included and thus makes for variety.

Piano Music of Liszt. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1534) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-100) \$4.67.

Funérailles.

Sonetto del Petrarca No. 104.

Valse Oubliée No. 1.

Rákoczy March.

Horowitz certainly has a flair for Liszt. He makes these selections sound mighty exciting, and his superb technique is much in evidence. After each piece he plays one takes a deep breath. Excellent piano reproduction is an added feature.

Hindemith: Theme and Four Variations ("The Four Temperaments"). Franz Holletschek (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One side, and **Hindemith: Kammermusik No. 4, Op. 36, No. 3.** Peter Rybar (violin) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5074) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

VIOLIN



Paganini: Caprices, Op. 1, Nos. 13 to 24. Ruggiero Ricci (violin). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-252) \$5.95.

Several months ago London issued an LP disc (*L-LLP-264) which contained the first twelve of Paganini's "24 Caprices" played by the brilliant young violinist, Ruggiero Ricci. It was greeted with great enthusiasm by that limited number of music lovers who go in for pyrotechnics in the field of the unaccompanied violin. The present disc completes Mr. Ricci's task, and those who purchased the recording of the first twelve of the Caprices will doubtless be interested in his recording of the final twelve.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, FEST—Festival, HS—Hadyon Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PLM—Polymusic, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 9

NOVEMBER, 1951

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

FROM TIME to time we receive inquiries from our readers asking us to recommend a good portable or table model phonograph which will play all three speeds automatically. They are seemingly not interested in a radio-combination; they just want a good phonograph that will give them record reproduction that is comparable to that of an expensive floor model radio-phonograph. The two models that we are going to recommend, while they certainly do not give the same reproduction that one would get from a radio-phonograph costing several hundred dollars, do give remarkable fidelity. We were astounded when we first heard them.

Arthur Ansley, who for the last twenty years has been designing and manufacturing phonographs, has recently placed on the market two very fine instruments. The first is his model LP-5. This is a portable suitcase model covered with tan leatherette. It contains a genuine Webster 3-speed automatic changer with separate needles for microgroove and standard records. An 8-inch speaker is coupled to a powerful 8-watt push-pull amplifier. The price of the Ansley Model LP-5 is \$99.95. (15" wide, 18½" deep, 8¾" high).

The other is an Ansley Model LP-6. This is a table model and uses the same Webster changer as the LP-5, but it has a larger (10-inch) speaker coupled to a 5-watt A.C. amplifier. The cabinet is in hand-rubbed mahogany, either dark red or fawn colored. It is somewhat superior in tone to the Ansley Model LP-5 described above. The price of the Ansley Model LP-6 is \$129.95. (15¾" wide, 20" deep, 12½" high.)

If your local dealer does not handle these phonographs, orders sent the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled. A leaflet illustrating and describing these instruments is available upon request.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33⅓ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

A new series of lower-priced 10" LP discs, featuring uninterrupted performances of classic selections heretofore available only on double-faced 78 rpm discs, has been inaugurated by Columbia. The first releases are listed below:

Brahms: *Academic Festival Overture*, Op. 80. One side, and Brahms: *Hungarian Dances*. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra — Walter. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-1) \$2.85.

Offenbach: *Orpheus in Hades*—Overture. One side, and Liszt: *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*. Columbia Symphony Orchestra — Rodzinski. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-2) \$2.85.

Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5*. One side, and Verdi: *La Traviata*—Ah! fors' è lui; Sempre libera. Bidú Sáyao (soprano) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-3) \$2.85.

Rodgers: *Oklahoma!*—Medley. One side, and Roumanian Fantasy. Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-4) \$2.85.

Ponchielli: *La Gioconda*—Dance of the Hours. One side, and Nicolai: *The Merry Wives of Windsor*—Overture. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra — Beecham. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-5) \$2.85.

Suppe: *Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna*—Overture. One side, and Strauss: *Morning Papers Waltz*. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra—Beecham. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-6) \$2.85.

Mendelssohn: *Ruy Blas*—Overture. One side, and Mendelssohn: *The Hebrides Overture*. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra—Beecham. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-7) \$2.85.

Saint-Saëns: *Danse Macabre*, Op. 40. One side, and Saint-Saëns: *Omphale's Spinning Wheel*, Op. 31. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra—Mitropoulos. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-8) \$2.85.

Sibelius: *Finlandia*, Op. 26. One side, and Sibelius: *The Swan of Tuonela*, Op. 22, No. 3. Philadelphia Orchestra—Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-9) \$2.85.

Suppe: *Poet and Peasant*—Overture. One side, and Weber: *Der Freischütz*—Overture. Philadelphia Orchestra—Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-10) \$2.85.

ORCHESTRA



R. Strauss: *Don Juan*, Op. 20. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1563) \$2.83. Coupled with Wagner: *Die Götterdämmerung*—Siegfried's Rhine Journey. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1157) \$5.72.

Wagner: *Die Götterdämmerung*—Siegfried's Rhine Journey. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1564) \$2.83. Coupled with R. Strauss: *Don Juan*, Op. 20. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1157) \$5.72.

R. Strauss: *Don Quixote*, Op. 35. Bavarian State Orchestra conducted by Richard Strauss. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9539) \$5.85.

As readers may have noticed, this reviewer is a very qualified admirer of the art of Toscanini. It is with great pleasure, therefore, that we claim this disc contains the finest performances we have heard for a long time from Toscanini, and in the case of *Don Juan*, the best reading of that score we ever heard from anyone. For once, the maestro does not race and rush the music; it is really spacious, and it is played for the romantic and overblown thing that it is. But even better, the refining hand of Toscanini has worked wonders with the clarity and texture of this score. Good orchestral discipline always shows up in bold relief in *Don Juan*, and of course it does so here. The detail Toscanini works into this thing is just superb. What a pity that we must report one bad deficiency of this recording: the reproduction is bad. If it had about 50% more bass, it would be a fair job—actually the whole thing should be done over. As it stands, the quality is fair; the balance is also fair except for the almost complete absence of bass, and the over-all effect is thin and like something from a previous decade or more—and in something as heavily scored as *Don Juan*! Oh, Victor, where are thy engineers?

By doctoring up *Don Juan* with the controls of your set, you can hear an outstanding performance

of it. But you will not need to doctor the *Rhine Journey*, for the reproduction is notably better—in fact, it's quite good. And Toscanini's estimation of Siegfried's journey is a far more plausible one than he handed out several years ago. It is more like the fine one he gave us with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra many years ago. It just goes to show how a man's opinion of a score can change; this time it changed for the better. Toscanini has used a tempo similar to that which we usually hear from a German conductor. As the present one stands, it is about the most glorious *Rhine Journey* on discs. Both of these numbers would have fit most comfortably on a 10" LP disc. The *Rhine Journey* is just short of eleven minutes!

As for the *Don Quixote*, it is a revelation of how the score should sound—despite the several other fine recordings available. Strauss was a good conductor, and he demonstrates his art in full measure on this disc. The reproduction, while of a few years ago, is eminently satisfactory. Anyone interested in Strauss' tone poems should hear this one without fail.

S. Tschaikovsky: *The Swan Lake*, Op. 20—Suite. French National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8142) \$4.98.

Tschaikovsky: *The Nutcracker Suite*, Op. 71a. French National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8141) \$3.98.

Tschaikovsky: *The Swan Lake*, Op. 20—Suite (excerpts). One side, and Tschaikovsky: *The Nutcracker Suite*, Op. 71a. French National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8140) \$4.98.

Capitol has done a clever thing by issuing these two works on three discs. You may have the complete *Nutcracker* or the complete *Swan Lake* on separate discs. Or you may have a complete *Nutcracker* with a condensed *Swan Lake* each on one side of a 12" disc. The *Swan Lake* excerpts comprise the six best known sections: Introduction to Act II; Waltz; Dance of the Little Swans; Scene—Act II; Czardas; and Finale ultimo. The complete concert version contains all thirteen sections. The *Nutcracker* here recorded on both discs, is the usual Suite of eight movements.

Roger Désormière has distinguished himself in numerous recordings in the past. He has specialized in older music, doing many fine things on the French L'Oiseau-Lyre label. Recently he did some Delibes ballet music on London discs, and some Prokofiev for Capitol. This man is versatile, and everything he does is blessed with good taste. We would like to welcome him to these shores for a few concerts with some of our orchestras.

The French National Symphony does very well, for it is a splendid orchestra in every respect. Much of the gush and slush you hear played into this

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

music is missing, in its place is a vibrant, fresh quality which is ever so becoming. The reproduction is magnificent in quality and perspective. The total effect of these discs impressed us very favorably, and you will do well to investigate their merits if you want to add these items to your library. S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 2 in C, Op. 61. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugen Papst. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10082) \$4.85.

Humperdinck: Moorish Rhapsody. Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra conducted by Herman Abendroth. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7020) \$5.95.

Mercury has the Schumann *Second* field all to itself with two versions. The former version (*ME-MG-10059) was also recorded by the Munich Philharmonic under one Ratjen. This disc we do not recall, although we may even have reviewed it; but one thing is certain, we will not soon forget the newer version listed above. This is about the best Schumann *Second* we ever heard by anyone.

Eugen Papst is a name vaguely familiar to us; whoever he is, he has a marvelous way with this type of music. The performance is a relaxed one, full of tonal beauties and niceties of phrasing and dynamics. The high spot of the work is the third movement, an *Adagio espressivo* of soaring melodic line which reaches several climaxes of impressive beauty and intensity. This movement is handled magnificently by the conductor and orchestra. The Munich Philharmonic plays throughout with a beauty of tone and unity of purpose that exceeds any other recordings of theirs which we have heard. Mercury's reproduction is excellent in every respect; the surfaces of our copy were smooth, making this a most desirable disc.

If the Schumann Symphony may be considered as good romantic music, the Humperdinck *Moorish Rhapsody* is, in our opinion, among the worst of the romantic period. This is nineteenth century nonsense, that may have a few moments of worth here and there, but not enough of them to deserve a recording. It is surely no *Scheherazade*. It has echoes of half a dozen other composers and in this version is not played with the precision with which we would credit any second rate American orchestra. Abendroth and the Leipzig Orchestra are specialists in ragged attacks and insecure playing, which seems strange for these distinguished musicians. But that's the way it is, and we did not care for this disc as regards the music or the performance. The reproduction is good, if you are interested. S.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Sonata No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 41.** Nikolai Graudan (violin) and Joanna Graudan (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6980) \$5.95.

Klemperer's reading of the *Italian Symphony* is a monument to his conductorial genius—notably his

ability to select a good, just, and convincing tempo. His tempi throughout all four movements of the work are what we would call perfect, and far superior to the tempi chosen by other conductors in competitive recordings. The first movement does not have that hurried, breathless quality that so many conductors get out of it; yet it is not stodgy, as in the earlier version on London. There is plenty of excitement, but it is all under good control, and the phrasing is masterly. The second and third movements are played and phrased beautifully also, and seem to take on more importance than under other conductors. The last movement is taken at a really fast tempo, about as fast as we ever heard it, and this one can stand it. If any section of the work can stand a racing, it is the fourth movement, and Klemperer sails into it with gusto. The whole symphony has a freshness under his direction that makes it seem like a new experience.

The reproduction is excellent, although the fourth movement is inclined to sizzle a bit, like the old 78's in the center grooves, probably because of putting so much as one side of a disc. Other existing versions take two sides of a 10" disc. Columbia had a brilliant version by Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra on one side of a 12" disc, but it seems to be cut from the latest catalog, for some peculiar reason. While we are vigilant about how much the record companies are putting on their LP discs, and think some of them are getting rather capricious about the matter, we question the advisability of sacrificing quality and crowding the *Italian Symphony* on one side of a 12" disc for the purpose of devoting the other side to a cello sonata. . . . Ours is not to wonder why, so we must report the Graudan's do a sincere and finished performance of the sonata, and it's well reproduced. A most distinguished disc, and the best *Italian Symphony* you will hear in a lifetime! S.

Debussy: Nocturnes. Robert Shaw Chorale of Women's Voices with Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 3-7" discs in box (OV-WDM-1560) \$3.99. Coupled with **Debussy: Prelude a l'apres-midi d'un faune** and **Debussy: Suite Bergamasque—Clair de lune.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1154) \$5.72.

Debussy: Prelude a l'apres-midi d'un faune and **Debussy: Suite Bergamasque—Clair de lune.** Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. Coupled with **Debussy: Nocturnes.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1154) \$5.72.

The master of orchestral coloring is back again with an album of Debussy which gives him a field day for display of his unique gifts. The man is without peer in orchestral sonority, coloring, texture, and shading. Every subtlety known to the conductor's art is in his experience. In our opinion, this album exceeds his previous recordings of Debussy, and of course, the reproduction is far better, revealing these subtleties all the more clearly than ever

before. Certainly no one can get more shimmer and sheen in the *Clair de Lune*; Stokowski's orchestration and execution of the score has a higher concentration of stardust than anything else ever attempted. His *Afternoon of a Faun* is well known to a generation of music lovers as the most sensuous reading of the work. The three Nocturnes are here done completely, including the rarely performed *Sirenes* with its chorus of women's voices. *Clouds* and *Festivals* are familiar to most persons, who will appreciate the quality and finish of Stokowski's performances. *Sirenes* depicts the sea and its innumerable rhythms; then amid the billows silvered by the moon the mysterious song of the sirens is heard; it laughs and passes. This nocturne belongs with the two more familiar ones, and it is good to have the three complete on an LP disc. The other two works make a choice coupling, the whole disc being well chosen. "His Symphony Orchestra" is an enviable one that many a conductor would give his eye teeth to have for "his own." The quality of the first desk men is much in evidence in this music, and it is solo playing of the highest calibre. S.

Music of Victor Herbert. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 4-12" in album (C-MM-1012) \$6.19. 4-7" discs in box (C-A-1012) \$5.10. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4430) \$5.45.

This release of Andre Kostelanetz' is a new recording of one of his most successful collections. Identical in content with the previous edition, it has the advantage of new recording techniques (the old set was released in 1940 as C-MM-415 and was later transferred to microgroove as *C-ML-4094) and comes off brilliantly. A host of Herbert melodies crowd this disc—Ah! *Sweet Mystery of Life*; *Sweethearts Waltz*; *March of the Toys*; *Toyland*; *Streets of New York*; *Thine Alone*; *Indian Summer*; *When You're Away*; *Kiss Me Again*; *A Kiss in the Dark*; *Habañera*; *Sunset*; *I'm Falling in Love with Someone*; *'Neath the Southern Moon*; *Italian Street Song*; *Moonbeams*; *Gypsy Love Song*; *Czardas*; and *Dream Girl*. If you don't have this item in your "dinner-music" library and are partial to the opulent orchestrations of Maestro Kostelanetz, by all means add this to your collection.

CONCERTO



Copland: Concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra. Benny Goodman (clarinet) with the Columbia String Orchestra conducted by Aaron Copland. One side, and **Copland: Quartet for Piano and Strings (1950).** The New York Quartet: Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano), Alexander Schneider (violin), Milton Katims (viola), and Frank Miller (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4421) \$5.45.

Commissioned by Benny Goodman and dedicated to him, the Concerto was begun in 1947, while Copland was on a "good-will" tour of South America,

and completed in 1948. It is written in two movements, played without pause and connected by a cadenza for the solo instrument. It begins with an expressive type of music usually associated with the second movement of a conventional concerto. The idea struck us as good, for this leads into the cadenza, a display section, which is followed by the more agitated movement, the whole thing gradually building from slow and sweet to fast and agitated. The general feeling of the music is lyric and expressive, and rather carefully planned to be that way. But the idiom is distinctly contemporary and modern. Many would say it has an angular melodic line; we would agree, but we still like it. The use of harp, piano, and string orchestra is inclined to make the tone, along with the clarinet solo, a bit sweet and romantic in character.

The Quartet is a very recent work, which had its premiere performance in October 1950 by the group who have recorded it. They give the Copland Quartet what we assume is an authoritative reading. We wouldn't know too much about it, because we found the piece a tough nut to crack. You will get an idea from this brief description of the work. The first theme in the first of its three movements is a twelve-tone row. A second theme, recounted by the 'cello, is a retrograde form of the row. The prevailing texture of the entire movement has been described as "fugal, although the climax has the clanging sonorities typical of Copland." A lively figure built on a strong, jazz-like rhythm dominates the second movement, while the concluding movement is contemplative, comparable to some of Copland's most characteristic and beautiful music. Some of its subtleties fascinated us, but the over-all effect was one of striving to do something that defied the accepted ideas about melody or anything like a melodic line. We find a total lack of it rather tiresome. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 13 in C, K. 415. Artur Balsam (piano) with the Concert Hall Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 10 in C, K. 330.** Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1116) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 16 in D, K. 451. Artur Balsam (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Desarzens. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: (12) Variations on "Je suis Landor," K. 354.** Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1405) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466. Wilhelm Kempff (piano) with the Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7515) \$3.85.

There are but five missing, at the present tally, of the Mozart piano concertos; we will soon have the twenty-seven—all on LP discs. Nos. 13 and 16 appear for the first time this month. There is nothing exceptional concerning either of these works, and to

most ears they will sound like any one of a dozen other Mozart piano concertos. The collector who specializes in Mozart will welcome them for their fine performances here, as well as the fact that they help complete his series. We were particularly impressed with No. 16, as it has more substance and seems to be a more complex work than No. 13. We also like the coupling of this disc, the *Variations*, which Balsam plays with delectable finesse. In the case of both concertos, the orchestral accompaniment is good, and the reproduction likewise. Desarzens is the permanent conductor of the Winterthur Symphony, and a man of good taste. The *Sonata K. 330* we found enjoyable; it is a gay and lightweight piece that ripples along nicely. Balsam plays this with just the right amount of weight. The reproduction of both discs is good.

At the time of writing this review we have not heard the Serkin-Ormandy recording of the *Concerto No. 20*, but we would imagine it to be mighty fine. It will probably be the best reproduction, which would put it ahead of the Kempff one we are considering in this article. As for the interpretation and the actual performance, the Kempff version is one to be respected; this artist plays the music with admirable style, and is well accompanied by van Kempen. We do think the reproduction shows its age in this particular Deutsche Grammophon recording. We will wait to hear the Serkin-Ormandy set before announcing any final decision. S.

Barber: Concerto for 'Cello and Orchestra. Zara Nelsova (violinello) with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Samuel Barber. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-332) \$4.95.

"In issuing this work, London bows to the wishes of the composer who submits the concerto in its own musical terms, which he considers do not call for verbal description or musical analysis. There is a considerable cadenza in the first movement." This is the only reference to the concerto which appears in the cover notes, the rest of the story being about Mr. Barber, his life and his accomplishments. As readers know, we are apt to get testy when record companies (or in this case the composer himself) get stingy with the program notes, for that adds additional burden to the already harassed reviewer.

Much as we would like to tear it apart "on its own musical terms" we cannot, for the work is perfectly lovely, and truly, it is so easily accessible that it requires no salesmanship from a program annotator. It is, for once, contemporary music that sets out to be beautiful and not ugly, and it succeeds admirably. One would be willing to credit it to some well known composer of a century ago, except that the modern technique is in evidence too often—modern does not imply angular and cacophonous sounds this time. A three-movement work, there is nothing we would call original about the music or its form; it does not strive for innova-

tions. It is just pleasant to hear.

The performance by Miss Nelsova is a model of ease and smoothness. Her tone is round and never rough, and always secure, whatever the difficulty. The composer leads a good accompaniment, and the reproduction is good *ffrr*. You should enjoy this disc very much if you like good concerto music. S.

Bach: Concerto in D minor for Three Pianos and Strings. Robert, Gaby, and Jean Casadesus (pianos) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. One side, and **Bach: French Suite No. 6 in E.** Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2196) \$4.

Here is an attractive little work by the great Johann Sebastian Bach. It was reputedly composed to be played by himself and his two eldest sons but whether or not this is fact or fiction is of little importance. A known piece of information is that Robert Casadesus and company, at least, have made it a family affair. Joined by Gaby and Jean, his wife and son, Mr. Casadesus invests a minor Bach item with charm and interest. On the reverse side, Father Casadesus omits the family and devotes himself to the *French Suite No. 6* which he plays with high style and a light touch.

Mozart: Concerto in C for Oboe and Strings, K. 314.

Marcel Saitlet (oboe) with the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Bernhard Paumgartner. One side, and **Mozart: Offertorium pro Festo Sti. Joannis Baptistae, K. 72.** ("Inter natos mulierum") and **Mozart: Kyrie for Four Voices in D minor, K. 341** ("Münchener"). (Sung in Latin). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Salzburg Mozarteum conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-519) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Schumann: Quintet in E-flat for Piano and Strings,

Op. 44. Clifford Curzon (piano) with the Budapest String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4426) \$5.45.

The *Quintet for Piano and Strings, Op. 44*, considered by many critics Robert Schumann's greatest contribution to chamber music literature, has been accorded many fine performances. On LP alone there are now three versions by top-notch artists. The earlier Columbia disc (*C-ML-2081) with Serkin and the Busch Quartet was considered superior to the later Victor edition (*V-LM-1095) with Rubinstein and the Paganini Quartet. However, we feel that Clifford Curzon's artistry in combination with the Budapest players' deft musicianship has the lead with this latest Columbia release. There seems to be a tender, more poetical approach to the parts that

demand it, so that the running passages benefit more by the contrast. This particular quintet has a great many changes in mood and pace, and we have here a first-rate combination that presents a well-balanced performance.

Mozart: Duo No. 1 in G, K. 423. Szymon Goldberg (violin) and Frederick Riddle (viola). One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 13 in B-flat, K. 333.** Lili Kraus (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8523) \$4.85.

Mozart: Duo No. 2 in B-flat, K. 424. One side, and **Martini: Three Madrigals for Violin and Viola.** Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Lillian Fuchs (viola). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8510) \$4.85.

While we have had occasion to congratulate recording companies for their intelligence and foresight now and again, we feel that the evidence weighs heavily in the opposite direction most of the time. Here we have two Mozart Duos. They have been released by the same company but are on separate discs with another work for a backing. In one instance, it is at least logical since the selection is a Mozart work; the other, however, includes a composition by Martinu. Martinu is a fine composer, it is true, but a great many people who like Mozart do not necessarily take contemporary composers to their hearts. The music on both discs is admirably played by musicians of the first order but we would have preferred *Duos Nos. 1 and 2* on the same disc and would have left Lili Kraus' Mozart piano sonata and Martinu's *Madrigals* to seek more suitable companions.

Borodin: Quartet No. 1 in A. Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5035) \$5.95.

Haydn: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 64, No. 6. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in D, Op. 76, No. 5.** Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5034) \$5.95.

In a comparatively short time, the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet has built itself a reputation for masterly musicianship by way of Westminster discs. Here it offers works of composers born about a century apart, yet each is presented with a complete understanding of the work at hand; the differences in mood and musical approach between the classicist Haydn and the romanticist Borodin provide ample opportunity for this group to show its versatility. The Borodin quartet is a dark and moody work which occasionally breaks into a lighter, more animated style; essentially, however, it is a somberly emotional composition. The Haydn quartets under consideration here are from the composer's later years and on listening to them we were struck by the careful, concise writing. Had Haydn seen fit to orchestrate these chamber works rather than to confine them within the limits of a string quartet, we would have had two more symphonies of first quality for the orchestral repertoire.

Couperin: (4) Concerts Royaux. Phillip Kaplan (flute), Samuel Mayes (violoncello), and Erwin Bodky (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3013) \$5.95.

Rameau: (5) Pièces en Concerts. Phillip Kaplan (flute), Samuel Mayes (violoncello), and Erwin Bodky (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-83) \$5.45.

Rameau and Couperin, fellow countrymen and contemporaries, have, by way of these *Allegro* releases, provided us with what one might term "intellectual" dinner music. The *Concerts Royaux* and the *Pièces en Concerts* were written for performance at the French court, and we may suppose that they were to provide an elegant but unobtrusive background for elaborate dining and chitchat. As a consequence, there is nothing of great musical importance in them; they are, to be sure, perfectly constructed gems fit to grace any royal function—but that is all. The music itself is charming, delicate and cream-puffy but never in the least arresting; it just fills in the conversational lapses and the between-course waits.

Mendelssohn: Sonata No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 41. Nikolai Graudan (violoncello) and Joanna Graudan (piano). One side, and **Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian").** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6980) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

Copland: Quartet for Piano and Strings (1950).

The New York Quartet: Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano), Alexander Schneider (violin), Milton Katims (viola), and Frank Miller (violoncello). One side, and **Copland: Concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra.** Benny Goodman (clarinet) with the Columbia String Orchestra conducted by Aaron Copland. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4421) \$5.45.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in D minor, Op. 108. Nathan Milstein (violin) and Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 3-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1551) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-106) \$4.67.

Johannes Brahms was a composer who never had the adjective "prolific" applied to his musical output. What he did write was produced slowly and carefully with a thoroughness that one usually associates with the Teutonic mind. The results—to an appreciative audience—are anything but labored. Most of his compositions have a warm flow of melody that gives spontaneity to even his lesser efforts. Among these is the *Sonata in D minor*, a work which allots a hearty share of the proceedings to the piano but keeps the violin weaving in and out of the keyboard part, making it serve rather like a binder for

the musical fabric. Mr. Horowitz does nobly and Mr. Milstein, in spite of his subordinate role, plays to perfection.

OPERA

Bizet: Carmen (complete). (Sung in French). Licia Albanese (soprano); Risè Stevens (mezzo-soprano); Jan Peerce (tenor); Robert Merrill (baritone); with supporting soloists, the Robert Shaw Chorale, and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6102) \$17.16.

This is the second "complete" *Carmen* to find its way to LP records and is a marked improvement, in some respects, to the previous one (TNR June '51); it still leaves something to be desired stylistically. None of the singers in the present set is what could be called "at home" with the French language. On the other hand, this performance is full of fire and enthusiasm that almost atone for its fairly frequent lapses from good singing.

Risë Stevens is a surprisingly fine *Carmen*. She sings with expression and realizes much of the character of the role with only a few deviations from good taste, notably in the finale to Act 4 where she overacts. Vocally she displays a rich contralto, a little heavy for the part, but effective withal. Some of the chest tones are over-resonant and at the top her voice thins out, but neither is a serious detriment. Histrionically her *Carmen* is good—being common, vulgar and tigerish. Licia Albanese sings the somewhat thankless part of Micaëla in fine fashion, but the voice is somewhat mature for a little country girl. Her part in the first act duet and the third act aria (*Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante*) are well sung, however, by any standards. Mr. Peerce, as Don José, has a rough time of it, both figuratively and literally. The French language does not come easily to him, with the result that one is treated to very nasal and, at times, guttural singing. There is little tonal beauty in his performance but since he is a good musician and capable of infusing some drama into the part, it may be considered a better job than that of Raoul Jobin, his counterpart in the Columbia set. Robert Merrill excels as the Toreador. His famous aria is exceptionally well done and he is convincing throughout the set.

What makes this recording truly superior however, is the presence of Fritz Reiner at the helm. A strong hand is always needed at the desk in an operatic performance, and Reiner is just the man to supply it. Tempi, phrasing and musical underscoring of the drama are perfect. The chorus trained by Robert Shaw is superb. They sing with expressiveness uncommon in operatic choruses, and their general *esprit de corps* is of a high order.

The recording is as good technically, or perhaps even a little better, than that in Victor's *Rigoletto*. It is uniformly fine; the balance between voices and

orchestra could not be bettered.

The only serious weakness of this present set lies in the complete lack of French style on the part of the principals. For those who insist on such authenticity, the Columbia set exists. For really plush sound and spirit, the present set is hard to equal, let alone surpass.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg (complete). (Sung in German). Tiana Lemnitz (soprano); Emilie Walther-Sachs (contralto); Bernd Aldenhoff, Gerhard Unger (tenors); Ferdinand Frantz (baritone); Kurt Böhme, Heinrich Pflanzl (bassos); with Dresden State Opera Chorus directed by Ernst Hinze and the Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. 6-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-206) \$35.70.

The first "complete" recording of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* has been issued by Urania Records, Inc. As might be expected, any enterprise such as this is bound to be uneven, both artistically and technically. In this case the advantages and disadvantages just about cancel each other, making recommendation difficult.

The long cast is headed by Ferdinand Frantz, an uncommonly fine Sachs. All the possibilities of the role are explored by Herr Frantz and his resonant bass is heard to good advantage throughout the whole set. It is a performance that is sound musically and traditional artistically. Pogner is sung by Kurt Böhme, and this excellent artist gives a sterling performance. His large bass is more than adequate and his dramatic sense, evinced in the *Urania Freischütz* and *Rosenkavalier*, stands him in good stead. Gerhard Unger is a first-rate David, and Heinrich Pflanger is properly foolish and malicious as Sixtus Beckmesser. So much for the credit side of the ledger.

Serious debits must be entered against Bernd Aldenhoff as Walther. Herr Aldenhoff does not have a good voice; he strains, wobbles and generally man-handles his voice to such effect that one almost feels that Beckmesser's intrigues are justified. Tiana Lemnitz sounds tired. Perhaps the part does not lie well for her voice, for there is an ever-present sense of strain that is disturbing. The Eva of Emilia Walther-Sachs also falls into the category of undistinguished performances.

A credit, however, must go to Rudolf Kempe and the Saxon State Orchestra. Kempe holds the presentation together marvelously. His reading of the overture is spacious and magistral, while his sense of tempo and phrasing are those of a gifted conductor. The chorus sings well, the Dance of the Apprentices coming off very nicely indeed.

Technically the recording suffers from passages that seem to have been made with the orchestra in another room, while other portions are almost perfect in relation of voice to orchestra. Thus, as stated at the outset, this performance, while having much to recommend it, also contains much that gives one

pause. The biggest drawback is Aldenhoff—if you can abide his singing, the rest will be all right.

W.

An Operatic Recital. Rosa Ponselle (soprano) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*GOLDEN LEGEND-MLP-1201) \$5.85.

La Tosca—Vissi d'arte.

Manon Lescaut—In quelle trine morbide.

Sadko—Song of India.

Cavalleria Rusticana—Voi lo sapete.

Lohengrin—Elsas Traum.

Il Trovatore—D'amor sull' ali rosee.

Il Trovatore—Mira, di acerbe lagrime.

La Bohème—Si, mi chiamano Mimi.

Maritana—Scenes that are brightest.

Madama Butterfly—Un bel di, vedremo.

Considering the age of the original recordings from which this LP disc was made, we found the reproduction to be remarkable and, with the exception of one or two items in the RCA Victor *Treasury of Immortal Performances* series, by far the best we have had in releases of this type.

Rosa Ponselle's retirement at the peak of her career (1936) saddened many an opera lover; she had become a legend without being spoken of in the past tense. Her recordings have always been in demand and over the years have become increasingly difficult to obtain. This collection covers the period from shortly after her debut in 1918 through the year 1923, and, although the orchestral accompaniments are tonally archaic, Miss Ponselle's voice comes through to us magnificently. Riccardo Stracciari sings with her in the duet *Mira, di acerbe lagrime* from "*Il Trovatore*."

Arias and Scenes from Rossini Operas. (Sung in Italian). Conchita Supervia (mezzo-soprano) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9533) \$5.85.

Il Barbiere di Siviglia—Una voce poca fa (Act II). Scena della lezione (Lesson scene) (Act II).

L'Italiana in Algeri—Oh, che muso (Act II). Per lui che adoro (Act II).

La Cenerentola—Signore, una parola (Act I). Non più mesta (Act II).

Conchita Supervia, whose untimely death in 1936 abruptly terminated the career of one of the most fabulous artists the world has ever heard, was one of the last singers who could be aptly described as having "a nest of nightingales in her throat." Her phenomenal range and vocal agility have long been legendary, and it is cause for rejoicing to have her old records restored in such fine style on an LP disc.

The roles of Rosina (*Il Barbiere*), Isabella (*L'Italiana in Algeri*) and the title role in *La Cen-*

erentola have become Supervia's own by reason of her revival of these works sung in the original keys. Rossini wrote them for mezzo-soprano but with the passing of years, Rosina became the property of "coloratura" sopranos and the other operas lapsed into oblivion as far as this country was concerned.

Every selection on this record is a gem, while the *rondo-finale* from "*Cenerentola*," *Naqui nell' afano*, is incredible—it must be heard to be believed. There are several runs covering three octaves, perfectly executed! All the music is florid in the extreme and requires, in addition to a natural inclination for such music, years of training.

Conchita Supervia could not be said to have a "beautiful" voice, but no one ever had more vivacity, more *joie de vivre*, nor such ability to convey these qualities to the listener. She was that now unfortunately extinct type, a real singing actress. Those who have never heard the Supervia records are missing one of the phonograph's rarest treasures—and for those who may have worn out their original discs, it is a distinct pleasure to report that the transference to LP has been accomplished handsomely.

W.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Das süsse Lied verhallt (Act III, Sc. 2). (Sung in German). Tiana Lemnitz (soprano) and Franz Völker (tenor) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. And **Wagner: Tannhäuser**—Dich teure Halle (Act II, Sc. 1). (Sung in German). Tiana Lemnitz (soprano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **Wagner: (5) Wesendonck Gedichte.** (Sung in German). Tiana Lemnitz (soprano) accompanied by Michael Raucheisen (piano). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7019) \$5.95.

Wagner's *Five Poems for Female Voice*, the so-called *Wesendonck Gedichte*, were published in 1862. They were written, however, in the winter and early part of 1857-58 in the region of the Lake of Zürich, the scene of Wagner's idyll with the poetess Mathilde Wesendonck. The association of these songs and the poetess with *Tristan und Isolde* is well known, for two of the songs, *Im Treibhaus* and *Träume*, are indicated as being studies for that music-drama. When, several years later, Wagner saw the sketch for *Träume* from which had come the climax of the second act of *Tristan*, he wrote "Heaven knows, the song pleases me more than the proud scene!"

The present recording is a superb one. Mme. Lemnitz still has ample voice remaining for the purely mechanical part of the songs, and her artistry, which has earned for her the nickname "The Professor," is very much in evidence. The use of the original piano accompaniments instead of a full symphony orchestra is refreshing and adds immeasurably to the beauty of the performance.

Even more thrilling is the recording by Miss

Lemnitz and Franz Völker of the love duet from *Lohengrin*. This music has never sounded so beautiful—Lemnitz is a girlish Elsa and Völker a manly Lohengrin. It is a pity that Urania could not have obtained their services for its recording of *Tristan*, but in all events let us have more recordings of Völker, for he is far and away one of the finest of living tenors. As an added dividend there is a top-flight performance of *Dich teure Halle* by Miss Lemnitz who negotiates all the complexities of the formidable aria with ease. In this aria as well as in the duet, a special word of praise is due the conductor Arthur Rother for his intelligent handling of the orchestra.

The record is one of the finest LP's to date. The music is such that it will interest all types of music lovers—the opera enthusiast will want it for the magnificent *Lohengrin* and *Tannhauser* excerpts, the *afficionado* of fine singing will go into ecstasies, and the "man in the street" will also realize that he is hearing something out of the ordinary. W.

Verdi: La Battaglia di Legnano ("The Battle of Legnano") (complete). (Sung in Italian). Caterina Mancini (soprano); Edmea Limberti (mezzo-soprano); Amedeo Berdini (tenor); Rolando Panerai (baritone); Albino Gaggi (basso); with EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Fernando Previtali. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1220) \$17.85.

A little over a hundred years ago (in 1848 to be exact) political events in Italy reached the boiling point, and an attempt was made to unify the country and to throw off the yoke of Austrian oppression. The revolt was short lived, much to the ardent Verdi's chagrin; but the affair had its results, for all the patriotic feelings aroused in Verdi came out, about a year later, as *La Battaglia di Legnano*. This blood and thunder opus is based on an earlier and more successful attempt at freedom, that of the Lombard League's victory over Frederick Barbarossa and the Austrians in the twelfth century. *La Battaglia* was first performed on 27 January 1849 amid scenes of the wildest enthusiasm, the entire fourth act being encored! Since that time, however, the work has sunk into oblivion for the circumstances that brought it into being no longer existed. It is an occasional—not a universal—opera.

The cast for this revival contains some excellent voices, notably that of Caterina Mancini, a superb dramatic soprano, heard previously in Cetra's *Ernani* and *Nabucco*. The same virtues present in the previous recordings are in evidence here—the ringing top notes, the rich lower register and the ever present sense of style. Amedeo Berdini (heard previously in *L'Amore dei tre Re*) is a robust tenor with considerable power and a good sense of pitch but, unfortunately, lacks a distinguished delivery. The baritone, Rolando Panerai, has a large voice that is not always pure in tone. He tends to shout rather than sing and this deprives his voice of its considerable

natural charm. The three principals, however, have their work cut out for them because the music, while patriotic and fiery, is not particularly melodious. In addition, the characterization is two-dimensional; Verdi was not able, in this case, to breathe into his librettist's puppets.

Fernando Previtali, who always does a magnificent job at the conductor's desk, works hard; but since the music has the aforementioned fundamental weaknesses, he is unable to do more than galvanize the score into something resembling life. He certainly accomplishes as much as could be expected—in some instances more.

Good but somewhat coarse recording prevails. The set is worth hearing and is a must for those collecting all the Verdi operas. Those interested in *curiosa* will also find it absorbing. W.

(12) Arias from Lully Operas. Catherine Rowe (soprano) and Albert Linville (basso) accompanied by Achille Duvernoy (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-16) \$5.95.

Cadmus et Hermione—Air de Charité; Air de Cadmus.

Thésée—Air de Cérés.

La Naissance de Venus—Air d'Iris.

Ballet—Air de Rafrana.

Atys—Air de Cybèle; Air de Sangaride.

Psyché—Air de Bacchus; *Plainte de la Femme Affligée*.

Phaëton—Air d'Épaphos.

Amadis—Air d'Arcabonne.

Persée—Air du Grand Prêtre.

The Florentine Gianbattista Lully came to France in 1646, Gallicized his name (Jean Baptiste Lully), and entered the service of Louis XIV. His was a domineering character, tough and ambitious, and he eventually drove most of the native musicians out of the country by a series of machinations that gained for him an exclusive Royal concession for the performance of opera. "Lully died," writes Manfred Bukhofzer, in his excellent *Music in the Baroque Era*, "with one of the greatest fortunes ever amassed by a musician, derived partly from the income from his music and partly from shrewd real estate speculation. Lully's tyrannical egotism and unscrupulous exploitation of friends can only be compared with that of Wagner; but both bent the whole musical world to their artistic achievements."

In a comprehensive sampling of Lully's operatic writing, Lyricord presents two young American singers, Catherine Rowe and Albert Linville. Both have better than average voices, Miss Rowe having a lyric soprano of good range and Mr. Linville a basso that is both sonorous and musical. In addition, both singers are intelligent; they have a grasp of the proper style and sing passable if not perfect French.

The accompaniments are supplied by Achille Duvrenoy and, while they are superbly played, it is a pity that a small string ensemble with a trio of woodwinds such as Lully wrote for could not have been used. Perhaps this is ungracious, for the record, as it stands, is absolutely first rate and Lyric chord should be commended for its enterprise. W.

Songs of the Auvergne (arr. Cantaloube). Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 2-7" discs in box (OV-WDM-1540) \$2.83. Coupled with **French Operatic Arias**. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1156) \$5.72.

French Operatic Arias. Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 3-7" discs in box (OV-WDM-1562) \$3.99. Coupled with **Songs of the Auvergne**. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1156) \$5.72.

The Cantaloube arrangements of the *Songs of the Auvergne*, especially in the recording made by Madeleine Grey for Columbia, have long enjoyed a wide popularity. A recent version on LP by Susan Reed (TNR Apr. '51) was fair but not up to the Grey standard. Gladys Swarthout's recording of these haunting and beautiful songs is at once sympathetic and understanding. It is different from the previous recordings but is, none the less, extremely evocative and able. Vocally Miss Swarthout is superb; she sings with expression and considerable purity of tone.

The other side (of the LP version) is devoted to French operatic arias. There are three from "Samson et Dalila" (*Printemps qui commence*; *Amour viens aider* and *Mon coeur s'ouvre a ta voix*); the Letter Scene from Massenet's "Werther" and a *morceau* from "La Perichole," *Tu n'as pas riche*. Miss Swarthout is less happy in this material. Her Dalila is not tempting vocally and she does not seem to understand Charlotte's tragic music from *Werther*. As for the music from *La Perichole* it is only a trifle but, here again, the point is missed.

Excellent notes are supplied for the *Songs of the Auvergne*, sparse ones for the operatic excerpts.

W.

Operatic Arias. (Sung in French, Russian and Italian). Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (basso) with the EIAR Orchestra conducted by Arturo Basile. One side, and **Song Recital**. (Sung in Italian, German, French and Russian). Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (basso) accompanied by Giorgio Favaretto (piano). 1-12" disc (*CE-50076) \$5.95.

Nicola Rossi-Lemeni is a young (he will not reach his 29th birthday until this month) basso who is presented in a surprisingly varied program of songs and operatic excerpts. The choice is designed to demonstrate the soloist's versatility, which could have been very effective but, unfortunately in this case, it back-fires to a certain extent.

The *lieder* comprise items from Germany, France and Russia—all sung in the original language. Beethoven's *In questa tomba* and Schumann's *Widmung* rub shoulders with Moussorgsky's *Song of the Flea* and an unaccompanied folk-song, *The Siberian Prisoner's Lament*. For good measure Ibert's *Chanson de la Mort* and Brahms' *Die Mainacht* are included. Rossi-Lemeni is not yet ready for *lieder*. His naturally beautiful voice is not nearly well enough controlled for such taxing songs. Neither does he have the artistry as yet to get at and convey the inner meanings of the highly complex art forms he essays. The operatic excerpts suffer from the same faults. Boris Godounoff (*Monolog and Clock Scene*) calls for more than vocalizing as does Mephistopheles, either Boito's (*Ecco il mondo*) or Gounod's (*Le Veau d'or*) and King Philip in "Don Carlos" (*Ella giammai m'amo*) requires understanding and dramatic ability of a high order.

Sgr. Rossi-Lemeni has a very large voice that is not too well trained. He is not able to control it to the degree necessary to realize its full natural beauty. Whoever coached him in these songs and excerpts had in mind, as a model, the unforgettable Feodor Chaliapine—an extremely dangerous model for a young singer to emulate. The result impressed this reviewer, who is perhaps being a little unkind, as a caricature of the inimitable Russian. Those responsible for Rossi-Lemeni's further training would do well to spend more time on the mechanics of voice production and less in trying to hitch his wagon to the star of Chaliapine. W.

Verdi: La Traviata (complete). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano); Jan Peerce (tenor); Robert Merrill (baritone); with supporting soloists, chorus and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 13-7" discs in box (OV-WDM-1544) \$16.04. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6003) \$11.44.

This performance of *La Traviata* was produced for two NBC broadcasts that took place on the 1st and 8th of December, 1946. RCA Victor has transferred the transcription made at that time to tape and dressed it up for the present records.

The performance itself will, in all probability, please the many admirers of the Toscanini type of conducting. His distinctive style and mannerisms are very much in evidence, and the orchestra is given its full share of prominence. Licia Albanese is the Violetta and is uniformly good. Her principal arias and scenes, particularly the *Amami Alfredo, quanto t'amo* in Act 2 and the *Addio del passato* in Act 3 are excellent both dramatically and vocally. Jan Peerce is a dramatic Alfredo but he shows little beauty of voice. The aria *Dei miei bollenti spiriti* is rushed through in breathless fashion, as is the *Brindisi* in Act 1. Robert Merrill is wooden, although he has an undeniably beautiful voice. The aria *Di provenza* struck this reviewer as being rather

"hammy," while in the big duet with Violetta (*Pura siccome un angelo*) Mr. Merrill is content to sing all the notes, but no more.

Toscanini drives the score, singers and orchestra unmercifully—to the detriment of the music. He contrives to make this, one of the most delicate of Verdi's operas which is in reality a "chamber opera," sound noisy and frenetic. The singers are required to subordinate themselves to the director to such a degree that they lose character. It is a case of a good thing being carried too far. In short, the operation is successful but the patient dies.

The only other *Traviata* on LP is the even earlier Columbia set under Vincenzo Bellazza which is not nearly so effective technically but represents a truer conception of Verdi's work. There is little doubt, however, that this present set will enjoy a wide sale and acceptance if only because of Toscanini's presence at the conductor's desk.

The recording, except for a certain "deadness" in the studio (8-H?) is well done. Excellent notes and a complete libretto are included. W.

Highlights from Cavalleria Rusticana and I Pagliacci. Licia Albanese and Zinka Milanov (sopranos); Jussi Bjoerling and Jan Peerce (tenors); Robert Merrill and Leonard Warren (baritones); with orchestral and choral accompaniments. 5-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1565) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1160) \$5.72.

Famous Wagnerian Tenor Arias. Set Svanholm (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 4-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1561) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1155) \$5.72.

Both of the above LP discs contain items previously reviewed in THE NEW RECORDS.

From *Cavalleria* we have *Siciliana: O Lola* (Bjoerling); *Il cavallo scalpita* (Merrill); *Voi lo sapete* (Milanov); *Intermezzo* (Boston Pops Orch.); and *Addio alla madre* (Bjoerling).

From *Pagliacci* are *Prologue: Si può?* (Warren); *Ballatella: Qual fiamma avea nel guardo!* (Albanese); *Nedda! Silvio! A quest' ora* (Albanese and Merrill); *Vesti la giubba* (Peerce).

Mr. Svanholm favors us with *Höchstes vertrau'n* and *In fernem Land* from "Lohengrin"; *Am stillen Herd* and *Preislied* from "Meistersinger"; *Siegmund's Monologue* and *Siegmund's Spring Song* from "Walküre"; and *Rome Narrative* from "Tannhauser."

Mozart Operatic Arias. Ezio Pinza (basso) with RCA Victor Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 4-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1555) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-107) \$4.67.

We can forgive Mr. Pinza's lapses into the vernacular (*Andiamo*, *September Song*, etc.), which have occupied him for some time as a result of his Hollywood sojourn, when he returns to us with

some of the Mozart arias he is notably equipped to present. While we have heard better work from his younger days, Mr. Pinza still has what it takes and disappoints in but two of the arias (*Deh vieni alla finestra* and *Finch' han dal vino* from "Don Giovanni"). The others are sung beautifully and include *Madamina, il catalogo* from "Don Giovanni"; *Possenti numi* and *Qui sdegnò non s'accende* from "The Magic Flute"; and *Non più andrai* and *Se vuol ballare* from "The Marriage of Figaro."

Great Tenor Arias. Jussi Bjoerling (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra. 3-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1546) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-105) \$4.67.

RCA Victor presents this month a new collection of arias by the celebrated Swedish tenor, Jussi Bjoerling. Some of the items in this collection are already known to Bjoerling fans but we wish to indicate here that the recording does not contain transfers from old 78's. Mr. Bjoerling's effortless singing is always a pleasure to hear. This recital, his first on LP, contains the following arias: *Vesti la giubba* from "I Pagliacci"; *Salut! demeure* from "Faust"; *Addio alla madre* from "Cavalleria Rusticana"; *Che gelida manina* from "La Bohème"; *O Paradiso!* from "L'Africana"; and *Air de fleur* from "Carmen."

CHORAL



Rossini: Stabat Mater (complete). (Sung in Latin). Ilona Steingruber (soprano); Dagmar Herrmann (alto); Anton Dermota (tenor); Paul Schoeffler (basso); with the Vienna Akademiechor and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-24) \$5.95.

Fifty or sixty years ago, perhaps even longer, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* was considered good music, great music in fact. It was performed frequently and became a veritable war-horse. Cornet soloists played an arrangement of the *Inflammatu Chorus* on the least provocation. The trombone soloist responded with *Cujus animam*. Then the work suddenly fell into disrepute, was ignored with what can only be described as beautiful unanimity. Only a few numbers were recorded in the 78 rpm electrical era (1925-1947), and of these few, only two were available domestically and not for long at that. So the present complete recording, made recently (May 1951) in Vienna will come as almost unknown music to many record collectors.

The main thing about the work in this splendid recording and performance is its sheer vitality and almost super-charged emotional quality. The music is very characteristic of Rossini, although his use of the orchestra shows a great advance over the earlier operas. The soloists are uniformly good, the chorus is alert and sonorous and the orchestra more than fulfills its part of the bargain. Jonathan Sternberg's direction is, as several hearings will confirm,

sincere and rational. He makes no attempt to be a virtuoso although he is well aware that he is dealing with virtuoso music. The "standard" numbers are stunningly performed; Dermota makes a fine effect with the stirring *Cujus animam* and Paul Schoeffler is a revelation in the beautiful *Pro peccatis*. The great *Inflamatus Chorus* is very demanding, especially on the soloist, and Miss Steingruber does a superb job while the chorus and orchestra are tremendous—the trombone passages at the close are unbelievably thrilling.

The recording is good throughout; the general balance between singers and orchestra being maintained very successfully. A recording of this work has long been overdue, and it is a distinct pleasure to have it appear in so impressive a performance.

W.

Handel: Te Deum ("Dettingen"). (Sung in English). Soloists with Chancel Choir of the National Presbyterian Church directed by Theodore Schaefer and the National Gallery Orchestra conducted by Richard Bales. 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-6) \$5.95.

This *Te Deum*, which is further identified as the *Dettingen Te Deum*, was written to commemorate the British victory (over the French) at the town of the same name in Bavaria. This was, of course, one of the innumerable battles in the War of the Austrian Succession (Hohenzollerns vs. Hapsburgs). The victory was achieved on 27 June 1743 and Handel wrote this occasional music in July of the same year. It was presented to the public, along with the *Dettingen Anthem*, in November 1743 and was received with great acclaim.

The *Te Deum* is the real Messianistic Handel—the Handel of the "big bow-wow." High trumpets, the grand baroque style and the large utterance are all present. It is a fine extravert work, cast in a mould that has since been lost forever. The text is from the Book of Common Prayer, a translation of the Hymn of Saint Ambrose of Milan that begins *We praise Thee, O God! We acknowledge Thee to be the Lord*. The work is divided into eighteen sections consisting of nine choruses and an assortment of solo arias, a trio, a quartet and a fanfare for trumpets.

The Chancel Choir of the National Presbyterian Church, Washington, D. C., under Theodore Schaeffer and the National Gallery Orchestra directed by Richard Bales give a rousing performance. The chorus has been wonderfully trained, and the orchestra, featuring three high trumpets, plays the score in well-nigh perfect fashion. The soloists are adequate without being especially distinguished.

Technically, this effort of WCFM is exceptionally fine; the balance between orchestra and chorus being excellently maintained. The recording of the chorus is particularly noteworthy for its clarity and the absence of all the rattles and wheezes usually associated with this type of record. Dr. William Ober supplies, as usual, very informative notes, entertain-

ingly written. Such notes could well serve as a model for the industry.

W.

Mozart: Mass in F, K. 192 ("Missa Brevis"). One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Dixit et Magnificat, K. 193**. (Sung in Latin). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Salzburg Mozarteum conducted by Hermann Schneider. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-18) \$5.95.

Mozart: Offertorium pro Festo Sti. Joannis Baptistae, K. 72 ("Inter natos mulierum") and **Mozart: Kyrie in D minor for Four Voices, K. 341** ("Münchener"). (Sung in Latin). Salzburg Mozarteum Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto in C for Oboe and Strings, K. 314**. Marcel Saillet (oboe) with the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Bernhard Paumgartner. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-519) \$5.95.

Five works by Mozart, four of them new to records, make their appearance this month and all of them come from the home of Mozart and Mozart tradition, Salzburg. The present reviewer can remember reading, some twenty years ago, reports in the New York Times, giving accounts of the Salzburg Festivals and wishing desperately that he could go or in some way hear the performances described so enticingly. The latter part of the wish, in all events, has come true; for these, as well as many other fine recordings, have brought the Salzburg Festivals to our homes.

The Lyrichord disc is a delight from beginning to end. The *Mass in F* (*Missa Brevis*) is an unchallenged masterpiece. It is concise, beautiful and full of an intensity of feeling that would be unbelievable in a nineteen year old if the nineteen year old were anyone except Mozart. The *Dixit* and *Magnificat* that follow fill out the balance of the record in the happiest manner possible. They are more colorful than the *Mass* due to the scoring, which includes trumpets and tympani, and both are on the showy or festive side. It is surmised that these latter works were written for some church festivity. Both are beautifully sung, style being evident in every phrase. The soloists have fresh, young voices and the Mozarteum Orchestra and Chorus under Herman Schneider give an excellent account of both themselves and the music.

Period's contribution is also noteworthy. The *Offertorium pro Feste Sti. Joannis Baptistae* is another of those incredible works, this time of the fifteen year old Mozart! The *Kyrie* dates from one year later. The *Offertorium* is Italian in style, a cheerful work for the most part. The *Kyrie* is more sombre, more "learned" as the saying goes, but still a wonderful example of 18th century church music, albeit the models on which it is based go back several hundred years. The same chorus and orchestra as on the Lyrichord disc perform these works under the direction of Jonathan Sternberg.

The other side of the Period record is devoted to a sparkling performance of the *Concerto in C*, for oboe and strings. This work is also known in a version for flute and as such was recorded by RCA Victor many years ago. It is a thoroughly charming bit of music full of the joy of life and played to the hilt by Maral Saillet and the orchestra. First rate recording is an added attraction in both discs.

W.

Brahms: Gesang der Parzen, Op. 89 and Brahms: Nanie, Op. 82. One side, and **R. Strauss: Wanderers Sturmlied, Op. 14.** (Sung in German). Vienna Kammerchor with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5081) \$5.95.

In 1882, after the first two symphonies were behind him, Brahms set Goethe's *Gesang der Parzen* for six part chorus and orchestra. This grandiose poem, concerned as it is with man and "Gods," is an obscure sort of text, rather what Germans would call *tief*. Brahms' music is that of his mature style—melodic, brooding and dark colored. Also on this first side is a setting of Schiller's poem, *Nanie*. This work was occasioned by the death of Brahms' friend, Anselm Feuerbach. *Nanie*, it may be recalled, was Aphrodite's son who was "sore wounded" by a wild boar and died, "for Beauty must fade (and) . . . the perfect must die." This, too, is sombre music as befits a memorial piece.

Richard Strauss' contribution to the disc is a youthful work based on portions of Goethe's *Der Wanderers Sturmlied*, a work he (Goethe) subsequently described as *halbunsinn* (half crazy). To give Strauss credit, however, he chose one of the more consistent portions, the invocation to "Genius." The language in this work, as in the two Brahms items, is high sounding and on the bombastic side while the music, although tuneful, is not especially distinguished.

The now familiar Vienna Kammerchor and Vienna Symphony Orchestra perform impeccably. Swoboda's direction is sound, if somewhat uninspired. The recording is well up to Westminster's already high standards. Texts and translations are supplied. W.

Beethoven: Mass in D, Opus 123 ("Missa Solemnis"). (Sung in Latin). Ilona Steingruber (soprano), Else Schuerhoff (alto), Ernst Majkut (tenor), Otto Wiener (basso), with the Akademiechor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-6990) \$11.90.

In 1818 Beethoven heard that his friend and pupil the Archduke Rudolph was to be made Archbishop of Olmutz, so he started the *Mass in D* (Op. 123) with a view to having it performed at the installation ceremony. When the Archduke was made Archbishop, some two years later, the work was not ready; and, as Beethoven's biographer, R. H. Schauffler, aptly points out, it was fortunate for

the success of the ceremonial, for Beethoven was decidedly neither an ecclesiastical nor a vocal writer. In addition to its formidable vocal difficulties ("Singers ought to be able to do anything except bite their noses," Beethoven once remarked) it would have been over-long for the occasion.

The *Missa Solemnis* has been compared with the *Ninth Symphony* in that both are "imperfect" works, still magnificent in thought and execution although virtually impossible to give perfectly in performance. Otto Klemperer and the Vienna Kammerchor do as fine a job as one can expect to hear in this imperfect world. The whole concept of the music is on a grand scale—the spirit and feeling are in the grand manner. The big passages, such as the *Et vitam venturi* fugue and the *Benedictus* are among the finest things the phonograph has given us. The soloists are adequate—there are better singers but it is not fair to judge them from the Mass because of its complete disregard for the limitations of the human voice.

The recording is, on the whole, a good job. There are no passages where the music "breaks up" although the balance between chorus and soloists is not always maintained in the proper ratio. The orchestra, too, sometimes sounds a bit far away but considering the magnitude of the project it all comes off amazingly well. Vox has, as usual, given thought and care to the packaging, supplying comprehensive notes and the complete text.

W.



DICTION

Genesis Suite. Narrator with chorus and the Janssen Symphony Orchestra of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8125) \$4.98.

Two or three years ago Werner Janssen made a recording of this unusual work for Artist Records at the 78 rpm speed. It enjoyed a reasonable sale for an item of this character. We doubt that this older recording is presently available.

The present recording, with a narrator who wishes to remain nameless because of reverence for the sacred text which he reads, presents the work in a slightly different form. The earlier version began with the episode entitled "Creation" and ended with a Postlude by Schönberg. The present one begins with a Prelude by that composer and there is no Postlude. We do not have a copy of the score and the earlier recording is not available for comparison, and so we do not know whether the same piece of music that was once a Postlude is now a Prelude. As far as we are concerned it makes no difference. We found Schönberg's lovely bit of orchestral writing a fitting and pleasing introduction to the narration with musical background that follows.

This unique work was conceived by Nathaniel Shilkret, a conductor and composer who is well-

known to most record collectors because of the great number of recordings he conducted when he was a musical director for Victor. His idea was to set important passages from the book of *Genesis* to music—the text to be spoken by a narrator with appropriate musical backgrounds. Mr. Shilkret supplied the musical setting for the first episode "Creation." He then invited other leading composers to supply settings for the succeeding passages. The musical background for the second episode "Adam and Eve" was supplied by Alexandre Tansman; the third "Cain and Abel" by Darius Milhaud; the fourth "Noah's Ark" by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco; the fifth "The Covenant" by Ernst Toch; and the sixth "Babel" by Igor Stravinsky.

VOCAL

Schubert: Die Winterreise, Op. 89. (Sung in German). Han Hotter (baritone) accompanied by Michael Raucheisen (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-111) \$11.70.

Schubert: Die Winterreise, Op. 89. (Sung in German). Victor Carne (tenor) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WL-5087/8) \$12.50.

Two more versions, raising the total to three now available on LP, of Schubert's immortal *Die Winterreise* make their appearance this month.

Decca has transferred the Deutsche Grammophon recording by Hans Hotter to LP and has done an admirable job. Hotter, as many collectors know, is the possessor of a sympathetic baritone that is capable of conveying expressively many moods and emotions. This performance, while individualistic almost to the point of eccentricity, must be accounted the best of the available LP *Winterreise* cycles, but even it falls well short of the incredibly high standard set by Gerhard Hüsch in the old Schubert Society Set issued in 1933. Michael Raucheisen is the very able accompanist for Herr Hotter.

The Westminster recording features Victor Carne, a tenor new to records, and the veteran Gerald Moore. Carne has a low tenor, Germanic in quality and training—it is not a sensuous voice. He sings with acceptably careful phrasing, but what is missing is the necessary inspiration, artistry—call it what you will—that will lift the performance above the average. There are a few good moments, notably in *Das Wirthaus*, when Carne overcomes his diffidence and projects the song with genuine feeling; but almost immediately thereafter he repents and goes back to his previous colorless manner.

It seems strange that Westminster, usually meticulous in its choice of both artist and music, should have signed Carne to do the cycle when (one assumes) the services of Alfred Poell were available. Poell is the one singer, in this writer's opinion, who could have successfully challenged Gerhard Hüsch.

In both sets the recording is very good; notes and texts of excellent quality are supplied. W.

Russian Songs. One side, and **Spanish and Portuguese Songs.** Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by George Reeves (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2198) \$4.

Whenever we see a new Jennie Tourel release, we sit up with anticipation because we have never been disappointed in the consummate artistry of this gifted singer. We have even grown to like compositions we had not cared for previously because her interpretive genius made us like them. A perfectionist, Miss Tourel—at home in several languages—gives one assurance that she understands and feels every last word in the songs she presents. In the Russian collection are Dargomijsky's *I Still Love Him* and *My Darling Girls*; Gretchaninoff's *Over the Steppe* and *Lullaby*; and Moussorgsky's *On the River Don* and *Hopak*. The Spanish and Portuguese songs include: Granado's *El Majo Discreto*; Ginastera's *Triste* and *Chacarera*; Nin's *Paño Murciano*; Villa-Lobos' *Miúu (A Gitinha Parda)*; and Obradors' *Coplas de Curro Dulce*.

Songs from Lehar Operettas. Aulikki Rautawaara (soprano), Peter Anders (tenor) with the German Opera House Orchestra. One side, and **Excerpts from Oskar Straus Operettas.** Jean Löhe (tenor); Madlon Harder and Rosl Seegars (sopranos); with chorus and orchestra of the Berlin State Opera conducted by Hans Schindler. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8139) \$4.98.

Capitol has selected a number of Telefunken recordings of selections by Lehar and Oskar Straus and grouped them upon this LP disc. All of the pieces are sung in German by artists who are famous in Middle Europe for their success upon the light opera stage. Selections from *The Merry Widow*; *The Land of Smiles*; *The Chocolate Soldier*; *A Waltz Dream* and others are included on the attractive disc.

PIANO

Mozart: Sonata No. 7 in C for Piano, K. 309. One side, and **Mozart: Allegro in G minor, K. 312** and **Mozart: Menuetto in D, K. 355** and **Mozart: Adagio in B minor, K. 540** and **Mozart: Gigue in G, K. 574.** Erwin Bodky (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3012) \$5.95.

Students and lovers of Mozart should find the present disc of extreme interest. Here we have Mozart's music played on a piano identical with the instrument he used himself. His music on this record should sound just as it did to the composer at the time he wrote it.

In 1777 Mozart saw and played a pianoforte made by Andreas Stein of Augsburg. At the time he wrote to his father saying that it was the finest instrument he had ever seen and though it was ex-



pensive it was well worth its cost. From then on Mozart wrote his piano works for that instrument.

The present recordings were made on a genuine Andreas Stein square piano—the property of the present soloist, the distinguished musicologist and pianist, Erwin Bodky.

Americans in Paris. Virginia Morley and Livingston Gearhart (duo-pianists). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2197) \$4.

Virginia Morley and Livingston Gearhart (Mr. and Mrs. Gearhart at home), via two pianos, take us on a musical tour of Paris, a city which has become a second home even to some Americans who have never been there. Starting off with a two-piano arrangement of Gershwin's *American in Paris*, there follows *April in Paris*; *Parlez-moi d'amour*; *Mouvements perpétuels*; *La Tirelontaine*; *Fêtes*; *Nocturne*; *Pièce en forme de Habanera*. The trip concludes, appropriately, with Offenbach's *Can-Can*. Many of the items, in addition to the first-mentioned, are arranged especially by Mr. Gearhart for two keyboards. The entire collection is a sprightly one and should appeal to all enthusiasts of duo-piano music.

Mozart: Fantasia in C minor, K. 475 and Mozart: Sonata No. 14 in C minor for Piano, K. 457. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 9 in D for Piano, K. 311.** Leonid Hambro (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-81) \$5.45.

Except for the *Sonata No. 9 in D, K. 311*, the selections on this disc are already available on LP records. Thus, unless you are particularly interested in the young pianist, Leonid Hambro, the present disc will not be of great value. Certainly younger players could find works that have not already been recorded if they would take the trouble to look for them. If they would do that, they would surely be heard by a much wider audience in the field of recorded music.

Schumann: Etudes Symphoniques, Op. 13. One and one-half sides, and **Schumann: Toccata in C, Op. 7.** Lubka Kolessa (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1111) \$5.95.

Brahms: Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel Op. 24. One and one-half sides, and **Brahms: Intermezzo in E-flat, Op. 117, No. 1 and Brahms: Intermezzo in C-sharp minor, Op. 117, No. 3.** Lubka Kolessa (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1108) \$5.95.

With the aid of these two LP discs one may have in his own home a recital by the distinguished pianist, Lubka Kolessa. Miss Kolessa has been living in Canada since 1938, and for some time conducted master piano classes at the Toronto Conservatory of Music. She is known for her interpretation of classic and romantic repertory. She has a light touch and a graceful style that is eminently suitable for the selections which she has chosen for these discs. We cannot imagine her playing Liszt; but with Schumann

and Brahms she is quite in her element, and the results are highly pleasing.

Mozart: Sonata No. 13 in B-flat, K. 333. Lili Kraus (piano). One side, and **Mozart: Duo No. 1 in G, K. 423.** Szymon Goldberg (violin) and Frederick Riddle (viola). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8523) \$4.85.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHAMBER MUSIC.

ORGAN



Bach: Canonic Variations on "Vom Himmel hoch da komm' ich hier." One side, and **Bach: Chorale and Variations on "O Gott, du frommer Gott."** Robert Noehren (organ). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-116) \$5.45.

Noehren's series of organ records for Allegro continues with one of the most interesting so far. We say this because it should prove to be attractive music for those interested in organ records, but not necessarily devoted students of the art of organ playing and its finer points. This select group can find interest in nearly any organ record. But the music loving public in general finds much of this stuff really rough going. Here then, is a disc with that always easy-to-grasp form: theme and variations.

In the variations on *Vom Himmel hoch* Bach packed into a chorale the whole art of canon, yet there is a fair amount of emotional content too. It has plenty of Christmas joyousness and cheeriness. It was composed by Bach in the last years of his life and is one of his important works.

The variations on *O Gott, du frommer Gott* were composed when Bach was only 17 years old. This composition is descriptive in parts, and has much charm and beauty. The registration for both pieces is given, together with the stoplist of the organ. This is a most interesting and useful idea of Allegro's, which we commend highly. You can learn what a Gedeckt and 4' Principal sound like when played together. Noehren uses the organ of Grace Episcopal Church in Sandusky, Ohio, for this disc; and the reproduction is good although, as in the past, a shade too dead, acoustically, for our taste. We recommend this organ record to all organ devotees, as well as to the specialists and students. S.

HARPSICHORD



Landowska Plays for Paderewski. Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 3-7" discs in album (ØV-WDM-1586) \$3.99. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1186) \$5.72.

Wanda Landowska seems to have taken time off from her monumental task of recording *Das Wohltemperierte Clavier* in its entirety to give us a *petit concert* of harpsichord music dedicated to the mem-

ory of Paderewski. The selections in the program are Polish either in origin or inspiration and include the following: *Air dans le goût Polonais* (Couperin); *Air grave pour deux Polonais* (Rameau); *Two Polonaises* (Oginski); *Chorea Polonica* (Cato); *Gagliarda* (Jacob le Polonais); *Three Polish Dances of the 17th Century*; *Mazurka*, Op. 56, No. 2 (Chopin); and *The Hop and Bourree d'Auvergne* (Landowska).

Miss Landowska's playing is superb, as one might expect, and the selections are varied and not at all heavy-handed, considering the number of *polonaises* that figure in the proceedings. We have but one unkind thing to say with regard to this release and it has nothing to do with the estimable Landowska or her presentations. Obviously RCA Victor has not become fully adjusted to 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm discs and has taken a recording that could have occupied a 10" LP disc with room to spare and placed it on a 12" disc.

VIOLIN

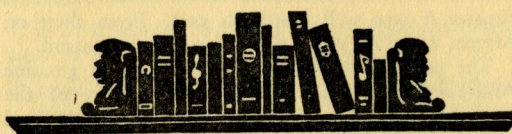
Chausson, Poème, Op. 25. One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Introduction and Rondo capriccioso, Op. 28.** Zino Francescatti (violin) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2194) \$4.

A brilliant showpiece for the violin has been coupled, on this long-playing disc, with a quieter, moodily poignant work for the same instrument; we think this not only a wise choice—we consider it a proper sampling of Zino Francescatti's versatile virtuosity. Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo* has been a "must" in every concert violinist's repertory, yet this marks its first appearance on LP. It is a gaudy piece but always an exciting one when played in such fashion. Chausson's *Poème* is presented for the second time on microgroove records. We liked Jacques Thibaud's recording (*VX-PL-6450) but this newer disc has superb recording (in addition to the Francescatti genius) to put it well in front.

VIOLONCELLO

Vivaldi: Sonata No. 1 in B-flat and Vivaldi: Sonata No. 3 in A minor. One side, and **Vivaldi: Sonata No. 4 in B-flat and Vivaldi: Sonata No. 5 in E minor.** Samuel Mayes (violoncello) accompanied by Leo Litwin (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-95) \$5.45.

Samuel Mayes, formerly first violoncellist of the Philadelphia Orchestra and now holding that position with the Boston Symphony, gives sterling performances of these Vivaldi sonatas. He is ably supported by Leo Litwin at the piano. As we do not recall that these works were previously recorded, the present disc should be of particular interest.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, FEST—Festival, HS—Hodyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PLM—Polymusic, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 † indicates 45 rpm.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 10

DECEMBER, 1951

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

ALL of this issue of THE NEW RECORDS might easily be given to the nine LP records listed below; but that, of course, is impractical. However, we believe that there are enough of our readers interested in the music of America's Colonial Period to warrant our listing them and indicating the various selections on each disc. We hope that in doing so we will cause those persons interested to investigate these recordings. We can say that the reproduction and the record surfaces are excellent and that the artists are well qualified for the tasks assigned to them. With *The Bay Psalm Book* and the (6) *Ballads* there is supplied a leaflet containing the text of the various selections. Adequate notes are printed on the back of each of the record envelopes.

Early American Psalmody

The Bay Psalm Book (Cambridge, 1640). Contents: Old Hundred; Windsor; Ten Commandments; Hallelujah; London; York; Pater Noster; Old 113th. Margaret Dodd Singers with Gordon Myers (precentor). 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-2007) \$4.85.

Ballads in Colonial America

(6) **Ballads**. Contents: King Henry V's Conquest of France; The Lamentable Complaint of Queen Mary; The Duchess of Suffolk's Calamity. Jean Ritchie (soprano). Song of Six Queens Married to Henry VIII; A Voyage to Virginia; The Mournful Lamentation. Tony Kraber (baritone). 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-2005) \$4.85.

Catholic Mission Music in California

Catholic Music of the Southwest. Contents: Missa de los angeles; Si quæris miracula; Cantico espiritual: Pues sois sancto sin igual; (2) Alabados; Santo Dios. Coro Hispanico de Mallorca directed by Padre Juan Thomas. 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-2001) \$4.85.

Instrumental Music in Colonial America

Gehot: Quartetto in D, Op. 7, No. 6. One side, and **Moller: Quartetto in E-flat**. New Music Quartet. 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-2002) \$4.85.

Taylor: Sonata No. 4 in D and **Taylor: Sonata No. 6 in C**. One side, and **Leaumont: Duo Concertant**. Luigi Silva (violin) and Arthur Loesser (piano). 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-2004) \$4.85.

Reinagle: Sonata. Arthur Loesser (piano). One side, and **Franceschini: Trio Sonata in B-flat**. Jose Figueroa, Jacques Margolies (violins); Joseph Saunders (violin); Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-2006) \$4.85.

Peter: Quintet No. 1 in D. One side, and **Peter: Quintet No. 6 in E-flat**. Moravian Quintet. 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-2013) \$4.85.

Peter: Quintet No. 2 in A. One side, and **Peter: Quintet No. 5 in B-flat**. Moravian Quintet. 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-2014) \$4.85.

Peter: Quintet No. 3 in G. One side, and **Peter: Quintet No. 4 in C**. Moravian Quintet. 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-2015) \$4.85.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

New Records for Christmas

Choice Christmas Carols. Leonard MacClain (organ) with chimes and celesta. 1-10" disc (*VAL-DORAY VLD-101-L) \$3.

Contents: Adeste Fideles; Fairest Lord Jesus; It Came Upon a Midnight Clear; O Little Town of Bethlehem; The First Noel; Silent Night; O Holy Night; Joy to the World; Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; Jingle Bells; Deck the Hall.

Mario Lanza Sings Christmas Songs. Mario Lanza (tenor) with Jeff Alexander Choir and orchestra conducted by Ray Sinatra. 4-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1649) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-155) \$4.67.

Contents: The Lord's Prayer (Malotte); The First Noel; Adeste Fideles; Away in a Manger; We Three Kings; O Little Town of Bethlehem; Silent Night; Guardian Angels.

Christmas Hymns and Carols. Columbia Choristers directed by Lehman Engel. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2199) \$4.

Contents: Deck the Halls; Wassail Song; O Little Town of Bethlehem; God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen; Corpus Christi; Good King Wenceslas; Silent Night; Holy Day Holly Carol; It Came Upon a Midnight Clear; The First Noel; Lullay My Liking; Pat-a-pan; Midwinter; We Three Kings; Virgin's Cradle Hymn; Sing We Noel; In Dulci Jubilo; Adeste Fideles.

Christmas Hymns. George Shackley (organ and chimes). 1-12" disc (*BL-CP-600) \$3.85.

Contents: Adeste Fideles; O Little Town of Bethlehem; Silent Night; Away in a Manger; It Came Upon a Midnight Clear; Hark! the Herald Angels Sing; Joy to the World.

(NOTE: Same selections on both sides of this disc; on one side they are played on organ only and on the reverse on chimes only.)

Songs for Christmas. Nelson Eddy (baritone) with chorus and Paul Weston and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4442) \$5.45.

Contents: Jingle Bells; Good King Wenceslas; God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen; O Holy Night; Adeste Fideles; O Little Town of Bethlehem; White Christmas; Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; Silent Night; Joy to the World; Away in a Manger; The First Noel; Deck the Hall.

Yuletide Songs from Many Lands. Trapp Family Singers conducted by Dr. Franz Wasner. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9553) \$5.85.

Contents: Es ist ein Ros entsprungen; Hirten, wachet auf!; Zu Bethlehem geboren; Deck the Hall; A la nanita nana; Il est né, le divin enfant; La canzone di natale; Es hat sich heut' eröffnet; Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head; Shepherds Come a-running; Lobt Gott, ihr Christen alle gleich; Es wird scho glei dumpa; Nu är det jul igen; Ihr Kinderlein, kommet; Der Scheibendudler; Carol of the Drum; Deine Wangen; Stille Nacht.

Christmas Carols. The Randolph Singers directed by David Randolph. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5100) \$5.95.

Contents: Silent Night; O Little Town of Bethlehem; God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen; What Child Is This?; The First Noel; Bring a Torch, Jeanette; Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming; Angels We Have

Heard on High; Adeste Fideles; Let Carols Ring; Hush, O Heaven; Pat-a-pan; Virgin's Cradle Hymn; Carol of the Bells; Quid Petis, O Fili?; Shepherds, Tell Me; Quickly, My Friends; Lullay My Liking; Saint Staffan.

The Music-Box Medley of Christmas Songs. Recordings of authentic music boxes. 1-10" disc (*BORN-AND AB-LP-1) \$3.50.

Contents: Silent Night; Adeste Fideles; O Sanctissima; Ave Maria; The Rosary; Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; Chimes of Trinity; Jingle Bells; O Tannenbaum; White Christmas; Monastery Bells; The First Noel; Song of the Bells; Auld Lang Syne.

ORCHESTRA



Hartmann: Symphony No. 4 for String Orchestra. INR Symphony Orchestra (Brussels) conducted by Franz André. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8146) \$3.98.

Ravel: Daphnis et Chloë—Suite No. 2. One side, and **Ravel: La Valse.** INR Symphony Orchestra (Brussels) conducted by Franz André. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8145) \$3.98.

Hartman is a name new to most of us. Born in 1905, he was heard from first in 1935, when his symphony "Miserae" was premiered at the Prague International Music Festival. Other recognition followed; then came the war and years of silence from Munich-born Hartmann. In 1947 came a "Symphonic Overture" and more honors succeeded this. Of the symphonic works presented at the 1950 music festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music in Brussels, it was Hartmann's *Fourth Symphony* for string orchestra—the work recorded here—which impressed hearers and critics most profoundly.

Karl Amadeus Hartmann, the present composer, is not to be confused with the Danish composer Johann Peter Emelius Hartmann, whose *Funeral March for Berta Thorvaldsen* is listed in some record catalogs.

Symphony No. 4 by Hartmann is a three movement work, two slow movements around a scherzo-like middle movement. There is no form to the music; it is composed of episodes and sections which drift along, go through developments, and grow in a natural sort of way. The music is not unconnected, for Hartmann is a gifted composer whose music is serious and profound; and his art finds expression in a new form of music which is different but imbued with its own logic. By new form of music we refer to his individual style of expression. His symphonic form is his own creation, a logical outgrowth of his thematic ideas and, of course, a departure from sonata form. You may or may not like the music, but you will find it serious and sincere. It is largely chromatic and not too harsh or strident; so you may care to try it.

Franz André, senior conductor of the Belgian radio, leads the ensemble he founded in 1935. This

distinguished Belgian conductor is well known as a guest in England and all over Europe. He has made some notable recordings recently for Capitol, and the present pair should add to his fame. His performance of the Hartmann symphony we would take to be an excellent one. Of the more familiar works in this brace, his *Daphnis and Chloé* and *La Valse* can stand up well with any others on discs. Both readings are impassioned and not in the strictly ballet-tempo tradition. They are colorful, exciting, and at times individual though always well controlled. Back to back on a 10" LP they are an excellent value. Reproduction on both discs is fine. S.

Masterpieces by Ellington. Duke Ellington and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4418) \$5.45.

It has been the policy of THE NEW RECORDS to mention in these pages, from time to time, releases of a more popular nature than those which ordinarily occupy our columns. Duke Ellington, along with Benny Goodman and a few others, has become a "classic" in his own time. There are few among us who do not know *Mood Indigo*, *Sophisticated Lady*, and *Solitude*. These selections have approached as near to the standard classics as it is possible for popular music to do. The three titles mentioned above, together with a lesser-known composition *The Tattooed Bride*, are presented in uncut concert arrangements which take them quite out of the usual three-to-four-minute versions we are used to hearing. Definitely a piece of Americana for those who collect this type of thing.

Martinu: Serenade and Martinu: Partita for String Orchestra (from "Suite No. 1"). Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One side, and **Martinu: Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra.** Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet and Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5079) \$5.95.

In 1931 a group of friends met in a small cafe in Montparnasse, after a concert given by the Pro Arte Quartet, and the artists took the occasion to ask Martinu to write a quartet with orchestral accompaniment. Immediately he realized the close relation between such a form and the tutti and solos of the concerto grosso. The idea attracted him, and the next morning he promptly set to work. In its form, and in its basic idea of contrast between solo instruments and the orchestra, this work is classical, while the modern spirit is revealed by the rhythmic and melodic treatment of the thematic elements. The *Concerto for Quartet and Orchestra* is in three movements, and anyone who dislikes what he calls modern music will dislike this music. The more adventurous will find a work of substance and much interest.

The four movement *Serenade* is cast along conventional lines and while it enjoys some twentieth-century freedom, it is a pleasant little work that moves along nicely and abounds in lyric beauty. This

piece could do much to persuade the dissenters about modern music that it does have its moments.

Martinu's *Partita* for strings, from his First Suite, demonstrates his art in filling old bottles with new musical wine. Martinu adheres to the classical four movements, but from the start, the spirit of modern harmony, freely combining different degrees of the basic tonality, is evident.

The three compositions by this modern master are all performed with competence and a lively feeling for the composer and his idiom. Swoboda directs each with conviction and the effect is always sincere. We admire this disc for the music itself as well as the excellent manner in which it is served, including Westminster's usual fine reproduction. S.

Mahler: Symphony No. 2 in C minor ("Resurrection"). Ilona Steingruber (soprano); Hilde Rössl-Majdan (alto); with the Akademie Kammerchor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7010) \$11.90.

One could not ask for a more magnificent performance of the monumental *Resurrection Symphony* of Mahler. All of the heroic elements are projected with strength and grandeur, while the contemplative sections of the work receive a searching rendition that bespeaks a sincere and thoughtful knowledge of the score. Klemperer is obviously possessed with a complete understanding of the work and of every bar of the music. His direction of the whole work is something at which to marvel. In a work this size, there are often lapses of inspiration and sections which do not sustain interest. We found none of that in this long recording. The playing of the orchestra is eloquent every moment. The soloists are excellent and sing with nobility of expression, as does also the fine chorus.

A previous recording by Ormandy and the Minneapolis Orchestra had many shortcomings, some due to the actual-performance recording problems. While that recording was a welcome one and had many merits, it is outclassed in every respect by the present one, which we can recommend unreservedly. And we recommend it not only to Mahlerites, but to anyone who likes large scale orchestral works. There is much in common with the Beethoven *Ninth Symphony*—not only the use of soloists and chorus, but from the standpoint of dramatic development. Both composers in their first movements are concerned with human struggle and give to their ideas a pure musical structure. In the last movements, both composers use an entirely free structure which is sectionalized after the demands of the contents. Considering its importance and the excellence of this performance and recording, we hope many who collect serious music recordings will at least listen to this one.

Mahler's greatness as a composer and his place on the musical horizon are widely disputed facts today. The case for him is presented in a most interesting fashion in the program notes accompanying this set.

His connection with Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Berlioz, and some of the moderns is stated, together with the generally accepted idea that Mahler was the summing up of the romantic era. Perhaps you will agree when you have heard this recording.

S.

Boieldieu: La Dame Blanche—Overture, and **Adam: Si J'Étais Roi** ("If I Were King")—Overture. One side, and **Boieldieu: Le Calife de Bagdad**—Overture, and **Herold: Zampa**—Overture. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-351) \$5.95.

Suppé: Poet and Peasant—Overture, and **Suppé: Pique Dame**—Overture. One side, and **Suppé: Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna**—Overture, and **Suppé: Light Cavalry**—Overture. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by George Solti. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-352) \$5.95.

Gluck: Alceste—Overture, and **Cimarosa: Il Matri-monio Segreto**—Overture. One side, and **Gluck: Iphigenia in Aulis**—Overture, and **Cimarosa: Gli Orazi ei Curiazi**—Overture. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Royalton Kisch. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-353) \$4.95.

Berlioz: Benvenuto Cellini—Overture, and **Lalo: Le Roi D'Ys**—Overture. One side, and **Massenet: Phédre**—Overture, and **Massenet: Werther**—Prelude, and **Saint-Saëns: La Princesse Jaune**—Overture. L'Orchestre de l'Opéra-Comique de Paris conducted by Albert Wolff. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-355) \$5.95.

Many music lovers are making collections of recordings of famous overtures, and this month they are certainly receiving a windfall—there are seventeen on these four LP discs. Generally speaking they are well-recorded and played with considerable brilliance. Overture fans will doubtless have a rare feast.

Sullivan—arr. Mackerras: **Pineapple Poll**. Sadler's Wells Orchestra conducted by Charles Mackerras. 6-7" discs in box (OC-A-1016) \$7.25. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4439) \$5.45.

Sullivan: (6) Overtures. New Promenade Orchestra conducted by Isidore Godfrey. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-398) \$5.95.

The Mikado.

The Pirates of Penzance.

The Yeomen of the Guard.

Ruddigore.

H.M.S. Pinafore.

The Gondoliers.

Pineapple Poll is a ballet, based on a tale by W. S. Gilbert entitled "The Bumboat Woman's Story," with music taken from the various Gilbert and Sullivan operettas and arranged by Charles Mackerras. It was first produced in London by the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet on 13 March 1951. It was an immediate success and was repeated num-

erous times. For those who like bright sparkling music, most of which is quite familiar, played by an excellent orchestra, this disc is highly recommended.

The second disc contains six G & S overtures well performed and faithfully reproduced.

Schubert: Symphony in C, Op. 140 ("Gastein"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-417) \$5.95.

This marks not only the first recording of this unique masterwork, but also the first opportunity for American audiences to hear the provocative and much discussed symphony, since it has never been presented in concert. A product of Schubert's maturity, the *Gastein* was composed between the "Unfinished" and the great *C major* (No. 9) symphonies. Through his letters, it is known that he composed this symphony and offered it for performance in Vienna, but the score has disappeared without trace. Although he mentioned the symphony, he said nothing regarding another piece dating from the same period—the *Grand Duo*, Op. 140 for piano four-hands. It is odd, considering the enormous scope of this piece which ranks as one of Schubert's most symphonically-conceived works, despite its scoring. Also odd is the fact that the score of the *Grand Duo*, in Schubert's handwriting, is a flawless copy, rather than the actual score on which the piece was conceived.

These facts have led such renowned musicians as Tovey, Joachim, and Brahms to surmise that the *Grand Duo* is either a piano reduction of the *Gastein* Symphony or a sketch which Schubert later intended to orchestrate. So convinced was Joachim that he orchestrated it in Schubertian style with Brahms' guidance. It is this Schubert-Joachim version of the *Gastein* Symphony which is here presented. (The only flaw this reviewer finds in this altogether plausible argument is the idea that the *Grand Duo* score could be a "sketch"—would it then be a flawless copy?).

Whatever the story may be, the music is overflowing with Schubertian charm and is surely a worth-while thing to have in the repertoire. We felt it not quite the equal of some of the other (earlier) symphonies, but the *Gastein* has its moments, and repeated hearings will no doubt increase our interest in the work. The performance and reproduction are truly excellent, with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under Prohaska playing with style and beauty of tone and phrasing. The string tone is reproduced especially well.

S.

Barber: Adagio for Strings, Op. 11. Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. And **Bloch: From Jewish Life**—Prayer; Jewish Song; Supplication. Zara Nelsova (violin/cello) accompanied by Ernest Bloch (piano). One side, and **Copland: Four Piano Blues**. Aaron Copland (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-298) \$4.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under PIANO.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

CONCERTO



Schumann: Concerto in A minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 54. Dinu Lipatti (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2195) \$4.

Schumann: Concerto in A minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 54. Guiomar Novaes (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7110) \$5.95.

There are now five versions of the Schumann *Concerto in A minor* on LP, and the situation is better that it was on 78's for each of these five is a good recording in its own right. Serkin and Rubinstein have been standbys for some time now, while the later edition by Schmid with Keilberth and the Bamberg Orchestra was a respectable estimation of the score. Also it was put on a 10" disc by Mercury. Now Columbia, who formerly put the work on a 12" disc by Serkin, issues a new one by Lipatti on a 10" disc, thereby competing with itself on price as well as on artistic merits. Funny world, isn't it?

Dinu Lipatti was recognized as one of the foremost young European pianists of his day when in the late 1940s he contracted an incurable disease of which he died in the Winter of 1950. His performance on this record reveals him as an artist of rare sensitivity and brilliant execution. This version has received high critical acclaim and we can appreciate why. It is a performance of deep feeling and conviction by a brilliant young artist of great technical accomplishment. The orchestral backing is good and the reproduction is fine. Since it is on a 10" disc it has the added advantage of economy too.

As for the Guiomar Novaes recording of this Schumann concerto, we can only say it is easily the finest performance we have ever heard from anyone anywhere at anytime. Her conception of this music is bigger than anyone else's who has recorded it, and her ability to perform that conception technically is there in full measure. At the same time, this is no mere technical display of virtuosity. It is a superb exposition of the content of the music, clothed in the finest musical terms, from a great artist who plays every bar with thought and feeling. Her orchestral collaborator, Klemperer, adds much to the performance with a magnificent accompaniment. The reproduction is a model of clarity and good, true color, well balanced throughout. Other recordings of this work are mighty good, but to us this is clearly the very best of them all. S.

Grieg: Concerto in A minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 16. Walter Gieseking (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4431) \$5.45.

The choice of which Grieg *Concerto in A minor* to select on LP is getting tougher with the issuance of more new versions. We will soon be up to the dozen versions once available on 78's (deliver the reviewer). This wholly delightful piece of romantic

music is justly popular, and there should be numerous versions with subtle differences, to make it possible for a choice. And there is just that now on LP. If you like the work played with an eye to its brilliance and virtuoso appeal, Rubinstein is the man, and his LP disc gives good value, for it has the Grieg on one side of a 12" disc with the Liszt *Concerto No. 1* on the reverse.

While Rubinstein's newer recording with the RCA Orchestra under Dorati always appeared to us to lack some of the magnificence of the earlier version in which he had Ormandy and the Philadelphians, it is still a glittering account of the work. Victor Schioler and the Danish State Radio Symphony under Tuxen have now been put on an LP—two sides of a 10" LP—and their version is the epitome of lyrical beauty—piano and orchestra—a lovely version with enormous appeal and sound musical values too. Other versions which may be found in the catalogs do not have sufficient excellence to make this list.

Gieseking's new recording is not like his earlier one, and those who are hoping for a carbon copy of the older one but with modern reproduction will be disappointed. We find the newer performance less poetic and less lyrical in approach, more brilliant and at times almost brittle. It has the virtuoso approach of Rubinstein, but is even harder. There are moments in the second movement that recall the earlier recording, but the over-all effect is too flashy for our taste. The reproduction is clear and bright, matching the performance almost too well. Van Karajan is in there pitching with the soloist, like two birds of a feather, to complete a slick picture. You may like it this way, in which case this recording will thrill you greatly. We'll give this one third place on the preference list. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 20 in D minor for Piano and Orchestra, K. 466. Rudolf Serkin (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4424) \$5.45.

The reigning favorite among Mozart piano concertos is No. 20; and well it might be, for its appeal is immediate and powerful—an eloquent work which is always accessible on first hearing. For most persons it should be the first Mozart concerto in a record collection, and it should be among the first half dozen piano concerti of all composers. On that basis, the present disc will enjoy a wide popularity and a brisk sale, for it will be preferred by a vast majority. It has not only the top names as artists, but it has as well just about the top musicianship and best reproduction. The musical values of the Lili Kraus and the William Kempff recordings are considerable, but the reproduction of neither is as good as this newer one. We did not care too much for the Clara Haskil performance on Westminster, good reproduction notwithstanding. So the choice for us is clearly this new one by Serkin and Ormandy, a pair well

known for their congeniality in matters musical around Philadelphia. If memory serves, this recording is probably an offshoot of a special concert given with Serkin, Ormandy and the orchestra in which the program consisted of three piano concertos, this being one of them.

Of all Mozart's piano concertos, the D minor is probably the most turbulent, the most impassioned, the most romantic. Mozart referred to it, in a letter to his father, in an off-handed manner, but when his parent arrived in Vienna a few weeks later for a visit, he found his son preparing for a concert that very evening, the program of which included the D minor Concerto with Mozart as soloist. The score had just arrived from the copyist. So belatedly was it handed to the composer that he had not time before the concert to play over the difficult final movement. Nevertheless, the concert and the Concerto were triumphant successes. A few days later Leopold (the father) was introduced to Joseph Haydn and had the pleasure of hearing that master say to him, "Before God and as an honest man I tell you that your son is the greatest composer known to me either in person or by name. He has taste and, what is more, the most profound knowledge of composition." S.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 1 in A minor for 'Cello and Orchestra, Op. 33. One side, and **Bloch: Schelomo** (Hebrew Rhapsody for 'Cello and Orchestra). Leonard Rose (violin-cello) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4425) \$5.45.

Columbia was wise in signing Leonard Rose, and we believe they will consider themselves fortunate to have him on the roster in a few years. This young man is considered by many to be one of the finest 'cellists of the day. Born in 1918, reared in Florida, and a graduate in 1938 of Curtis Institute, he spent a year in the NBC Symphony, was engaged as first 'cellist of the Cleveland Orchestra, and in 1944 became solo 'cellist of the New York Philharmonic. He is a member of the faculty of Juilliard and heads the 'cello department of Curtis. When Leonard Rose resigned his position as leader of the Philharmonic's 'cello section, a post he held for seven years, to take up concert work, he was accorded the highest tributes by two great conductors with whom he had worked. Bruno Walter paid tribute to his musicianship, technical perfection, emotional warmth, and rare beauty of tone. Dimitri Mitropoulos said "I consider Leonard Rose the superlative 'cellist of today. He is the finest I have ever worked with, possessing all the qualities that make a great artist." When you hear this record you will appreciate why these conductors made such lavish statements. This is no playing by a young artist who has much to learn, this is playing of the highest order by a master of the instrument, finished playing that leaves nothing to be desired, magnificent in every respect.

Saint-Saens' 'Cello Concerto in A minor is the more familiar of the French composer's two works in this form, and is in three movements which are played without pause. Like so many of Saint-Saens' compositions, it is suave and very melodic. A typical bon-bon of the day. Bloch's *Schelomo* is an impassioned and profound portrait of the Biblical monarch Solomon, and is recognized as one of the masterpieces of 'cello literature. Columbia has given Leonard Rose two of the finest works in the 'cello repertoire; he has performed them superbly, has excellent orchestral collaboration, and enjoys the finest of reproduction. If you like 'cello music you won't be able to resist this one. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Quartet No. 8 in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2 ("Rasoumovsky No. 2"). Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL 5098) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 131. Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1211) \$5.95.

With the exception of *Quartet No. 9*, which has been announced but has not come our way yet, all of Beethoven's works in this form are now available on long-playing discs. In the main, they are admirably played, and we may thank the seasoned Budapest Quartet and the comparative newcomers—such as the Paganini Quartet and the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet—for that.

The second quartet of the series of three designated "Rasoumovsky"—after the Russian nobleman who commissioned them—makes its first appearance on LP with the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet's fine performance. Our experience has been that this group is not capable of playing anything with less than exceptional skill and feeling. Their discs are met with consistent critical acclaim, and this is the more remarkable because they are obviously one of the hardest-working quartets in the field of recording. This contribution must be heard by every lover of fine chamber music.

Quartet No. 14, unusual for its seven movements, is given a sterling reading by the Pascal String Quartet. Although better known in Europe, this group has rapidly moved up among the few first-rate string ensembles since its initial appearance in this country during the 1949-50 season. A work of as many moods as it has movements, we would place this quartet second only to the one above. The surfaces, in both instances, are excellent; the Westminster disc has the edge for fidelity.

Ravel: Quartet in F. Juilliard String Quartet. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2202) \$4.

Ravel: Quartet in F. One side, and Debussy: Quartet in G minor, Op. 10. Stuyvesant String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*PHILHARMONIA PH-104) \$5.95.

Two of the greatest composers of the twentieth

century, with but one string quartet to the credit of each, did more to enrich chamber music literature than any of their contemporaries. Ravel's *Quartet in F*, individual as it is, might be called the offspring of Debussy's *Quartet in G minor*—not only were they composed within ten years of each other, but one may also see that Ravel's work is actually a progression from Debussy's both in the handling of musical ideas and the special brand of Gallic perfection they shared.

With the release of the above items, the lover of chamber music now has a good choice: if he wishes the Ravel work alone, the superbly disciplined performance by the Juilliard String Quartet is his; should he prefer the Debussy quartet only, the Paganini Quartet release (*V-LM-3) is available and beautifully performed; if his mind runs to possessing both, the Stuyvesant Quartet's double offering is not only a splendid one musically, it is an economic boon to the pocketbook.

Vivaldi: Concerto in D for Flute and Strings, Op. 3 ("Bullfinch"). Phillip Kaplan (flute) with the Boston String Orchestra. And **Vivaldi: Sonata No. 2 in F for 'Cello and Harpsichord**. Samuel Mayes (violin) and Erwin Bodky (harpsichord). One side, and **Vivaldi: Sonata No. 6 in G minor for Flute and Continuo and Vivaldi: Pastorale, Op. 13, No. 4**. Phillip Kaplan (flute); Samuel Mayes (violin); Erwin Bodky (harpsichord). And **Vivaldi: Sonata No. 6 in B-flat for 'Cello and Harpsichord**. Samuel Mayes (violin) and Erwin Bodky (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3009) \$5.95.

Because of the growing acclaim for the music of Antonio Vivaldi (1675-1741) this disc should be of more than usual interest to music lovers generally. Available space does not permit our considering the various selections but we can assure our readers that those interested in Vivaldi will find them worth while, and that they have been recorded by artists of high caliber. Samuel Mayes and Phillip Kaplan are both members of the Boston Symphony.

Hindemith: Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1939). Sidney Forrest (clarinet) and Benjamin Tupas (piano). One side, and **Hindemith: Sonata No. 3 for Piano (1936)**. Benjamin Tupas (piano). 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-15) \$5.95.

Both of these Hindemith compositions are for those who are interested in modern music; however, there is nothing wild about either of them. They may very likely be attractive to those music lovers who are looking in the modern direction, although they have not as yet fully accepted the modern idiom. The performances given by the brilliant young Philippine pianist, Benjamin Tupas, and the American clarinetist, Sidney Forrest, a student of Simeon Bellison and presently on the faculty of Peabody Conservatory (Baltimore), are highly satisfactory. Reproduction—excellent.

Schubert: Quartet in G for Flute, Guitar, Viola and Violoncello. K. F. Mess (flute), Arthur Faiss (guitar), Heinz Kirchner (viola) and Siegfried Barchet (violin). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-518) \$5.95.

This unusual work was originally a trio for flute, guitar and viola by a Bohemian composer named Matyegka. Young Schubert found it attractive and added a violoncello part—probably for a friendly group of players of which he was one. The work dates from 1814 but was lost for many years and was discovered in an attic of a house near Zell-am-See in 1918. It is pleasant music and was composed to be enjoyed. If you would like something out of the beaten track, this disc might be worth investigating.

Stravinsky: Duo Concertant. One side, and **Copland: Sonata for Violin and Piano**. Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Leo Smit (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8503) \$4.85.

Certainly Joseph Fuchs and Leo Smit are ideal interpreters of these works by Stravinsky and Copland. Those interested in modern music will surely be highly pleased with this Decca LP disc and to them we recommend it without reservation.

Debussy: Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano. One side, and **Villa-Lobos: Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano (1915)**. Ricardo Odnoposoff (violin) and Leonid Hambro (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3025) \$5.95.

Of particular interest on this record is the fine performance given Villa-Lobos' unpublished Sonata which dates from 1915. This work was entirely new to us, and we found it quite attractive. Several playings brought out more and more of its at first hidden beauty. We suggest that those interested in fine music for violin and piano give this composition more than a cursory hearing.

We already have a superb performance of Debussy's *Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano* on LP by Francescatti and Casadesu, which we do not think can be bettered. This remark is not intended to speak disparagingly of the very able present performance by Odnoposoff and Hambro.

Haydn: Divertimento in C and Boccherini: Quintet for Flute and Strings in E-flat. One side, and **Michael Haydn: Divertimento in C and Haydn: (4) Marches**. London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5080) \$5.95.

Karl Haas has gathered together a group of excellent string and woodwind players known as the London Baroque Ensemble. This group specializes in playing and recording such 18th century music as will be found on the present LP disc. The aim of Mr. Haas is to produce it in the spirit of the time in which it was written, and in our opinion he has succeeded extremely well. As one listens to this

record, he can close his eyes and easily imagine that he is in an 18th century drawing room enjoying with the aristocrats of that period the light and tuneful music that was provided for them by Haydn and Boccherini.

Khachaturian: Trio for Clarinet, Violin and Piano (1932). Simeon Bellison (clarinet); Bela Urban (violin); Virginia Urban (piano). One side, and **Ravel: Sonata for Violin and Piano.** Bela Urban (violin) and Virginia Urban (piano). 1-12" disc (*CLASSIC-CE-1002) \$5.95.

Of particular interest on this disc is Khachaturian's little known Trio which was introduced to the American public by Mr. Bellison at a concert in New York in November 1949. This work is based on Armenian and kindred folk airs, and will doubtless sound strange to ears not attuned to music of this character. The Ravel Sonata, as far as we are concerned, is not of great importance—it is a Frenchman's response to the American "blues" of the Gershwin era. When it first made its appearance on this side of the Atlantic it made quite a stir, but its popularity soon waned.

Mozart: Sonata No. 29 in A for Violin and Piano, K. 305 and Mozart: Sonata No. 28 in E minor for Violin and Piano, K. 304. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 16 in B-flat for Violin and Piano, K. 570.** Oscar Shumsky (violin) and Leopold Mittman (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-112) \$5.45.

Mozart: Sonata No. 40 in B-flat for Violin and Piano, K. 454. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 42 in A for Violin and Piano, K. 526.** Oscar Shumsky (violin) and Leopold Mittman (piano) 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-97) \$5.45.

The two LP discs listed above contain five of Mozart's sonatas for violin and piano. They have been beautifully played by two consummate artists and splendidly recorded by Allegro. Oscar Shumsky made his solo debut at the age of seven, under the baton of Leopold Stokowski, with the Philadelphia Orchestra. He was the youngest student ever to have been accepted by the great Leopold Auer and studied with Mr. Auer until the latter's death. Shumsky completed his studies with Efrem Zimbalist at the Curtis Institute. Leopold Mittman was born in Kiev in 1904. He studied at the Warsaw Conservatory and the Berlin Hochschule. After many successful concert tours in Europe he came to America in 1933 and has established himself as a chamber music player of the first rank.

Mendelssohn: Quartet in F minor for Piano and Strings, Op. 2. Artur Balsam (piano), Daniel Guilet (violin), Frank Brieff (viola) and Lucien Laporte (violin). One side, and **Mendelssohn: Sonata in F minor for Violin and Piano, Op. 4.** Daniel Guilet (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1095) \$5.95.

The present LP disc contains two Mendelssohn

works that will probably be new to most of our readers. The present recording of the *Quartet in F minor, Op. 2* was originally issued by Concert Hall in its "Limited Edition" series. So far as we know this is the first time that it has been made available to the general public. We know of no other recording of the *Sonata in F minor, Op. 4*. Neither of these compositions are of any great importance. The Quartet contains some lovely music especially in the middle movements and is certainly a remarkable work for a boy of fourteen. We found the Sonata mildly interesting; it abounds in many pleasing melodies that are certainly easy to listen to. Both works have been superbly played by most able artists. The reproduction is highly satisfactory.



OPERA

Mozart: Don Giovanni, K. 527 (complete). (Sung in Italian). Ina Souez, Luise Helletsgruber, Audrey Mildmay (sopranos); Koloman von Pataky (tenor); John Brownlee, Roy Henderson (baritones); Salvatore Baccaloni, David Franklin (bassos); with the Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Fritz Busch. 19-7" discs in box (ØV-WCT-59) \$22.95. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6102) \$17.16.

"Mozart, from whatever point of view he is regarded, is the unequaled master of opera." This unequivocal statement is from the pen of that old lion of Viennese dramatic critics, Ludwig Speidel. Herr Speidel goes on to say "... *Don Giovanni* (is) the only musical tragedy we have." The obvious truth of both these statements is borne out by the Glyndebourne performance of the work. It is only once in a lifetime that a virtually perfect presentation of *Don Giovanni* is given, and to have it captured on records is almost incredible good fortune.

It was in 1936 that HMV engineers went to Glyndebourne to record the complete opera for the Mozart Opera Society. The recording techniques at that time were good, and the transfer to LP has been deftly accomplished. But the recording is not too important—here the performance is the thing. The casting is perfect. Take a group of singers each perfectly schooled in the proper style and having fine voices; then have them willing to submerge individual egos to the music; and, finally, have the entire production thoroughly rehearsed by a conductor who knows and loves the music—that seems to be the recipe.

John Brownlee in the title role has a nobility and masculinity that make him the most convincing Don this reviewer ever heard. He is, of course, a baritone—which is what Mozart called for; to give the role to a bass as is so often done nowadays, spoils the whole effect. Baccaloni's Leporello is a work of admirable recreative genius. What a bragging and cowardly rascal he is! Roy Henderson delineates the country bumpkin, Masetto, in a manner that would

be hard to equal, let alone surpass. Koloman von Pataky sings the music of Don Ottavio more beautifully and stylishly than any other tenor past or present. His performance of *Il mio tesoro* surpasses the traditionally "best" version of McCormack by a wide margin.

And the ladies! Ina Souez, as the tragic Donna Anna, is magnificent! Hear her *Or sai che l'onore* and promptly be spoiled for any other singer's effort. Luise Helletsgruber is a striking Donna Elvira and Audrey Mildmay is a coquettish Zerlina. Together the cast works as an harmonious whole. The wonderful quartet *Non ti fidar* emerges as the dramatic and psychological masterpiece it is, while the finale *Gia la mensa è preperata* is the crowning achievement.

To the late Fritz Busch must go the credit for one of the most spectacular operatic performances ever to be recorded. It is truly an "immortal performance." W.

Giordana: Fedora (complete). (Sung in Italian). Maria Caniglia (soprano); Giacinto Prandelli (tenor); Scipione Colombo (baritone); with supporting soloists, EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Mario Rossi. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1222) \$11.90.

Umberto Giordano was one of "The Five," a group of Italian composers whose works are associated with the *verismo* movement, an operatic school that, to borrow a phrase, "sliced up life." Puccini was a leading exponent of this type of composition, as were Leoncavallo, Mascagni and Cilea. Although *Andrea Chenier* is generally considered to be Giordano's masterpiece, there is more than passing merit in *Fedora*, particularly as performed on these records. *Fedora* is based on a play of the same name by Victorien Sardou, who wrote it originally for Sarah Bernhardt. The plot, while complicated, is good and covers more territory than the Louisiana Purchase—St. Petersburg, Switzerland and Paris. The story is also replete with Nihilists, officers of the Imperial Russian Army, counts, musicians, grooms, doctors, coachmen and, for good measure, an agent of the Surêté. The time is the late 19th century, so there are bicycles and what the stage directions describe as *di campanella elettrico* making their first appearance in opera. Chronologically speaking, *Fedora* was first produced at Milan in November 1898, the same evening that a 25 year old tenor Enrico Caruso made a world reputation. The year 1906 saw the first Metropolitan presentation, and a subsequent revival, with Jeritza and Martinelli, featured the 1923-25 seasons.

Fine casting, such as one is beginning to take for granted as Cetra is concerned, is very much in evidence. The title role, that of Princess Fedora Romazoff, is in the extremely capable hands of Maria Caniglia, one of the world's foremost dramatic sopranos. Giacinto Prandelli, soon to make his American début, is a credible and forceful Count

Loris, and Scipione Colombo is a sincere and superior de Siriex. The minor roles are also well cast, outstanding performances being turned in by Carmen Piccini as Countess Olga and Cristiano Dalamangas in the dual roles of Cyril and Boroff. As is usual in operatic music, much hinges on the conductor, in this instance the eminently capable Mario Rossi. His sane and polished direction makes all the difference between a routine performance and one that is convincing. One of the outstanding moments of the opera is the ball scene of the second act, which is magnificently projected and is tremendously effective. The last act too, with its tragic and moving finale is memorably performed.

Cetra's recording is even and of good quality. And, while it might seem monotonous, mention must be made of the fine libretto—an unapproachable model for all other companies to follow. *Fedora*, as presented on these records, is good music, admirable theatre, and first class entertainment. W.

Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci (complete). (Sung in Italian). Carla Gavazzi (soprano); Carlo Bergonzi (tenor); Carlo Tagliabue (baritone); with supporting soloists, EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Alfredo Simonetto. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1227) \$11.90.

Hard on the heels of Columbia's recording of *I Pagliacci* comes this one from Italy and a comparison is both interesting and instructive. The Columbia set (TNR Oct. '51) was the best yet achieved by that company and it stands comparison with this "native born" performance very well. Cetra's version is also good, not as opulent vocally but has the undisputed advantage of a much stronger hand in the orchestra pit.

The Canio in this present set is Carlo Bergonzi, a dramatic tenor with little beauty of voice but considerable spirit and a thorough understanding of the role which he successfully conveys to the listener. Tagliabue is a veteran singer, seasoned and extremely capable. His voice, especially in the *Prologo*, shows signs of wear as evinced by the heavy vibrato; but once past this trying aria he turns in a superb performance. Carla Gavazzi is a very mature Nedda, vocally secure and dramatically sound. Her performance carries conviction, and in her duets with Tonio and Silvio she creates a semblance of reality that is very effective. The role of Silvio, often relegated to a third-rate baritone, is sung here by first-rate Marcello Rossi; and it is a thoroughly praiseworthy job, eliminating the usual dull spot in the first act.

The greatest difference between the two sets lies in the extra-musical qualities of the Cetra recording. The Metropolitan performance lacks the menacing and ominous atmosphere that hangs over this Italian presentation. Much of the credit for this quality accrues to Alfredo Simonetto, who has the performance under control at all times; and he is helped by singers and musicians who are steeped in the traditions of Italian opera. Vocally the cast of Tucker,

Amara and Valdengo is indubitably superior to the present group of singers, and Columbia's recording is better. Perhaps these advantages will swing the scales in favor of the domestically recorded set for most collectors. This reviewer's preference is for the more dramatic Cetra recording, despite a vocally poor Canio.

Cetra's recording is good; the usual excellent libretto and notes are included. W.

Highlights from "La Traviata." (Sung in German). Maria Cebotari (soprano); Helge Roswaenge (tenor); Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone); with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin State Opera conducted by Hans Steinkopf. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7011) \$5.95.

The great revival of interest in Verdi's works that made its way through Germany in the late Twenties and early Thirties still makes itself felt in such recordings as this *Highlights from "La Traviata."* The fervor and spirit that is evidenced in this performance is certainly the fruit of a genuine renaissance, a veritable "re-birth."

Urania advertises on the jacket of this disc "3 Great Voices of Our Time" and for once the blurb is justified by the contents. Cebotari, Roswaenge and Schlusnus are just that; in fact the late Maria Cebotari could be considered, on the strength of this recording, one of the finest Violetta's of all time. Her conception of the part, her expression and, above all, her glorious voice, make this interpretation of the unfortunate *demi-mondaine* a revelation. Helge Roswaenge, still singing magnificently, is an heroic Alfredo; it is not the suave, lyric performance we are accustomed to from Italian tenors, and many may feel his vocal style is not suited to the role, but there is no gainsaying the passion and masculinity of his delineation. Schlusnus is an old timer, polished, smooth and a tower of strength.

The excerpts are the usual ones except for the omission of *Di Provenza* for which one is thankful—there are already too many versions of this lacrymose and banal aria. A few unusual items are also included, notably the final part of the aria *Dei miei bollenti spiriti* that begins *O mio rimorso* and ends on a high D. It is somewhat unfortunate that the recording unaccountably deteriorates at this part of the disc but the effect is still wonderful. Another relatively unfamiliar passage is the finale to Act 2 (Act 3 in some versions) that commences *Invitato a qui seguirmi*. The general high level of excitement here is magnificent, and it must be accounted one of the finest operatic ensembles on records.

Other passages included, in addition to those mentioned above are: *Libiamo ne' lieti calici*; *Un di felice*; *Ah fors è lui*; *Sempre libre*; *Pura siccome un angelo*; *Che fai . . . nulla* (Amami Alfredo!) and *Parigi o cara*.

Urania has omitted the texts but has supplied short biographical sketches of the artists and included

are pictures showing a beautiful Cebotari, a handsome Roswaenge and a Mephistophelean Schlusnus. The recording is on a generally high plane and the disc is one most opera lovers will want, even though they have most or all the music in different versions. W.

Wagner: Tristan und Isolde—Liebesnacht (Act II). (Sung in German). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano), Set Svanholm (tenor) and Constance Shacklock (contralto) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 3-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1550) \$3.99 Coupled with **Wagner: Tristan und Isolde—Isolde's Narrative and Curse** (Act I) (TNR May '49). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1151) \$5.72.

For some reason unknown to us, two of RCA Victor's finest artists have been grudgingly allowed to make their appearance on long-playing discs; we refer to Marian Anderson and Kirsten Flagstad. With many fine recordings to her credit, it was only recently that Miss Anderson's Schubert songs were released as her first LP. Quite a few months back *Haugtussa*, the Grieg song-cycle, introduced Kirsten Flagstad to 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm discs. In spite of the welcome it received, there were no more Flagstad releases until this one. We hope that the ice has been permanently broken and that we shall have more recordings while Miss Flagstad is still around to do them. *Isolde's Narrative and Curse*, as noted above, was a previous release (on 78's and 45's). The transfer to LP is extremely well accomplished and the lack of interruption in the continuity of the scene adds immeasurably to the over-all dramatic effect.

If Wagner had written nothing else for "Tristan und Isolde," the *Liebesnacht* music would have been ample proof of his ability to compose sensuous, tender, soul-stirring melodies as well as the overwhelming, pompous and exhausting strains of the *Ring*. This recording of the Love Duet, with its soaring and ecstatic melodies, is assuredly a fine example of what can be done with *scenes* from operas. We would rather have several excellently done excerpts than a complete opera of uneven quality and mediocre performance. We assure our readers that here is a disc that every Wagnerite will want to own. H.

Wagner: Die Walküre—Act III (complete). (Sung in German). Astrid Varnay, Leonie Rysanek (sopranos); Sigurd Björling (baritone); with the Bayreuth Festival Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-116) \$12.11.

On two LP records Columbia brings to American audiences Act III from Wagner's *Die Walküre* as performed at this year's Bayreuth Festival on August 12th.

The third act of *Die Walküre* is one of the high spots of the entire *Ring*. It is also one of the most

human portions of a score that deals almost exclusively with gods and extra-human characters. The cast is an excellent one. Astrid Varnay is a full-voiced Brunhilde. Her characterization is one that lays emphasis on the womanliness of the role and her prayer *War es so smalsch* is exquisitely sung. Sigurd Björling, the Wotan of the performance, seems a bit stodgy, even stuffy, but most of this attitude falls away by the time the *Farewell* is reached. His anger with his erring daughter is well projected, while vocally his mastery is complete. In the role of Sieglinde, Leonie Rysanek is adequate. Her prophecy is well sung, but beyond this she has little to do except appear helpless and grateful.

Von Karajan conducts with his accustomed vigor and lack of subtlety. There is little imagination in his conception of the drama—everything is forthright—no nonsense. Of course, this is one way of approaching the Ring operas, but a little flexibility would not be amiss.

The recording, considering the technical difficulties that always confront the engineers at an actual performance, is very good. The ever-present problem of microphone placement is magnified a hundred-fold when the singers move about. Columbia's engineers have had to compromise on occasion, but the total effect is good.

The only other recording of this music on LP is one by Traubel, Jessner and Janssen, also on Columbia (*SL-105). Only Traubel is of true Wagnerian stature, both Janssen and Jessner being something less than adequate. As a memento of the 1951 Bayreuth Festival this present album is excellent. As a performance of Act III of *Die Walküre*, it is good; but one can recall superior presentations. W.

Puccini Arias. (Sung in Italian). Dorthy Kirsten (soprano) with the Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Fausto Cleva. 3-7" discs in box (©C-A-1015) \$3.95. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2200) \$4.

Miss Dorothy Kirsten, one of the more decorative members of the Metropolitan Opera Association, scores a definite hit with her first operatic LP disc. The material for her recital has been well chosen and is a fine combination of the familiar and unfamiliar.

The opening aria, *O mio Babbino caro* from "Gianni Schichi," is very sweetly sung, with careful attention to the meaning of the words. This is followed by a moving and exquisite performance of the thrice familiar *Vissi d'arte*. In this, as in the other arias, Miss Kirsten displays, besides her usual vocal virtuosity, a degree of expressiveness and understanding that make her one of the finest of American lyric-dramatic sopranos. These qualities are also exemplified in what is perhaps the finest *Un bel di vedremo* this reviewer has heard in a long time. The other *Madama Butterfly* excerpt, mysteriously identified on the record as *Tu, tu*, turns out to be the *Death of Butterfly* or *Con onor morire*. The *Tu, tu*

are the first words of the phrase, *Tu, tu piccolo Iddio*. The scene is dramatically and movingly sung.

The other side contains an aria from Puccini's unsuccessful *La Rondine*. The work has been termed a "waltz opera," and Miss Kirsten sings *Ore liete divine* in a highly ingratiating manner. The music however, is light-weight and of interest only because of its unfamiliarity. Arias from "Turandot" (*Morte di Liù*) and "Manon Lescaut" (*Sola, abbandonata*) complete the side. Both maintain the high standards set previously. Vocally all of Miss Kirsten's work is of high calibre. Her voice is sweet and pure over its entire range, and even in highly dramatic moments she never finds it necessary to sacrifice beauty of tone to achieve appropriate expression.

Columbia's recording is extremely good and Fausto Cleva's direction, while a bit on the pedestrian side, does not disturb the soloist. W.

Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro, K. 492 ("The Marriage of Figaro") (complete). (Sung in Italian). Irmgard Seefried, Sena Jurinac, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (sopranos); Elisabeth Höngen (contralto); Erich Majkut (tenor); Erich Kunz, Marjan Rus (baritones); George London (basso); with the Vienna State Opera Chorus and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-114) \$17.51.

The third "complete" *Nozze di Figaro* appears this month and, it must be stated at the outset that it comes as an anti-climax. After the superb (although old) Glyndebourne performance and the astonishing (and new) Cetra recording, this collection of arias, duets and ensembles is a distinct let-down. It is difficult to imagine, from an artistic or economic point of view, whatever possessed von Karajan, Columbia or whoever it was, to omit all the recitative.

A cast of good voices has been assembled for this torso of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf is a vocally resplendent Contessa, Irmgard Seefried an accomplished Susanna and Sena Jurinac a youthful Cherubino. The men are good, too. Erich Kunz as Figaro sings with authority and George London is in fine voice as Il Conte. The other members of the cast are also exceptionally able, particularly Erich Majkut as Don Basilio.

The trouble with the performance lies in von Karajan's direction for one thing. His choice of tempi leaves a lot to be desired. They are hurried more often than not, lending a *frantic* quality to the presentation that is ill-suited to Mozart's gracious and humorous score. And the other difficulty lies with the singers who are so obviously not at home in the Italian language that at times it is almost pathetic. The performance then, lacks humor, the touch is heavy and it becomes almost dull—a thing this reviewer always considered impossible.

The recording is inferior to Columbia's domestic efforts. It seems we will never get away from the type of microphone placement that favors the voice to such an extent that the orchestra sounds small and

distant. The set definitely should be heard before purchasing and if possible a comparison made with the two other available versions. W.

Debussy: Pelléas et Mélisande (complete). (Sung in French). Irène Joachim, Leila Ben Sedira (sopranos); Jacques Jensen (tenor); H. B. Etcheverry (baritone); Paul Cabanel (basso); with supporting soloists; the Yvonne Gouverne Chorus and orchestra conducted by Roger Désormière. 17-7" discs in box (ØV-WCT-61) \$20.65. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6103) \$17.16.

The long awaited "complete" recording of Debussy's *chef-d'oeuvre* has finally been released on LP by RCA Victor. There are few operas or, as the composer called it "an impressionistic tone picture," that have created more discussion than *Pelléas et Mélisande*. In 1908, on the occasion of the American *première* by the Manhattan Opera Company, a New York critic wrote of its "combinations of tones that sting and blister and pain and outrage the ear." Nowadays, ears used to Stravinsky, Berg and Bartók, will find *Pelléas et Mélisande* a pale, twilight score notable for its low vitality and the frustration of its characters.

The performance here recorded is an excellent one. Irène Joachim is a vocally superb *Mélisande* and Jacques Jansen an equally excellent *Pelléas*. Paul Cabanel as Arkel and Germaine Cernay as Genevieve also contribute performances well above average. The Golaud of M. Etcheverry is well conceived and is appropriately dark and villainous. This part becomes, in fact, the only "human" character in the opera.

Roger Désormière directs the performance with considerable insight and evolves an impressionistic picture that portrays all the unhappiness and nostalgic perfume of the score. His direction is such that more and more we listen less with our minds and more with our nerves. Since this was, in all probability, Debussy's aim, Désormière's handling of the performance must be considered a success.

RCA Victor has transferred the original 78's to LP in superb fashion. What they have not done, however, is annoying. There is no complete libretto; in fact, they do not even list the cast! They show the names of the artists and indicate them as soprano, tenor, etc., but no more. This is carelessness and shows a fine 18th Century disregard for the customer. For the prospective buyer's information, the other members of the cast, excluding those mentioned above are: Ynold (Leila Ben Sedira), Le Berger (Emile Rousseau) and Le Médecin (Narçon—misspelled Narçon on the labels). W.

Massenet: Manon (complete). (Sung in French). Janine Micheau (soprano); Libero de Luca (tenor); Roger Bourdin, Julien Giovannetti (baritones); supporting soloists with l'Orchestre et Choeurs de l'Opéra-Comique conducted by Albert Wolff. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLPA-7) \$17.85.

This is the first of Massenet's operas to appear

on LP and, but for a strange lapse from artistic good taste, it would receive an unqualified welcome. *Manon* has been neglected, along with most French opera, by the Metropolitan for so long that hearing this performance is like greeting an old friend one hasn't seen for years.

In the name part, Janine Micheau, is very convincing. Her voice is eminently suited to the role of the flighty young girl, and dramatically she realizes all the nuances of the character. It is a sincere and moving portrayal. Libero de Luca, as the Chevalier des Grieux, is something less than satisfactory. Here, as in the *Carmen* recording, he seems to have, so to speak, bitten off a little more than he can chew. His big scene in the third act, beginning with the aria *Ah fuyez douce image* and continuing with the duet *Toi! Vous!*, causes him at times to shout rather than sing, largely because the tessitura of the role is too high. In the lighter portions of the score, however, he sings with persuasiveness and charm. Roger Bourdin is a satisfactory Lescaut, making the most of the part and using his warm, sympathetic baritone to good effect. The numerous minor roles are in capable hands. M. Wolff directs the performance tastefully and the chorus and orchestra give outstanding performances.

The only real drawback to the set is the introduction of a spoken voice from time to time during the action. The notes accompanying the album state that "the opera is presented through the eyes of the author by means of a narrator who sets the scene and action of the plot in the same method that is used in the novel." This is very faulty reasoning and a poor excuse for the intrusion of a spoken voice. Such an admixture of two dissimilar forms (novel and opera) is bad and only serves to distract. And in this case, since the interpolations are in French, they are virtually useless to American audiences.

London has supplied superb recording but, as usual, no libretto. W.

Mozart: Die Zauberflöte, K. 620 ("The Magic Flute") (complete). (Sung in German). Sena Jurinac, Wilma Lipp, Irmgard Seefried, Emmy Loose (sopranos); Anton Dermota, Peter Klein, Erich Majkut (tenors); Erich Kunz (baritone); Ludwig Weber, George London (bassos); with the Singverein der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-115) \$17.51.

The successful performance of any Mozart opera is always difficult and the effective presentation of his last work in this form, *Die Zauberflöte*, offers problems of considerable magnitude. The many challenges of the incomparable score have been met, if not always successfully, with courage and imagination and the result is highly commendable.

The outstanding singer is Erich Kunz as Papageno. His smooth, colorful and flexible baritone is ideally suited to the music, while his obvious sense of humor

and his ability to characterize vocally make his performance a memorable one. Anton Dermota is a vocally superior Tamino and he copes fairly well with the colorless character of his role. Ludwig Weber lacks the vocal equipment to be a dignified Sarastro, but he is sincere. His singing of the two famous arias in the second act is admirable both for style and feeling. George London is impressive as the First Priest.

Irmgard Siefried turns in a fine performance as Pamina, negotiating the difficult *Ach, ich fühls* in admirable fashion. To Wilma Lipp falls the unenviable task of singing the formidable music allotted to *Astrafiammante*, Queen of the Night. The two arias are taken at a very rapid tempo, presumably for easier handling but they, especially *Der hölle Rache* lose much of their sinister character when taken so fast. Miss Lipp is accurate, reaching the F's in *alt* perfectly but she might be singing *The Carnival of Venice* for all the expression she manages to convey.

The only other complete *Zauberflöte* is the fabulous recording made in 1939 by Sir Thomas Beecham with Roswaenge, Hüsch, Berger, Lemnitz and Strienz. This has recently been transferred to LP discs and is, of course, artistically and vocally superior to the present set. Columbia's effort is a fine one, however, and there may be those who will prefer the more modern recording. A complete German-English libretto is supplied that also includes the spoken dialogue omitted from the recording. W.

CHORAL

Berlioz: *L'Enfance du Christ*, Op. 25 ("The Childhood of Christ"). (Sung in French). Soloists with the Raymond St. Paul Chorus and the Orchestra of the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7120) \$11.90.

The first recording of Berlioz' *L'Enfance du Christ* is a revelation. It is doubtful if the story has ever been treated in so natural and so convincing a fashion. It is uncanny how Berlioz, while writing virtually chamber music, still remains the same passionate, ironical, fabulous and human artist he is in the larger works.

L'Enfance du Christ is a trilogy: (1) *Le Songe d'Hérode*, (2) *La Fuit en Egypte* and (3) *L'Arrivée à Saïs*. It is the first of Berlioz' works for which he himself wrote all the words, and the text is of a beautiful simplicity and directness. It would be impossible to catalog all the magnificent music with which the score abounds. The strange and wonderful *Marche Nocturne*, representing a street in Jerusalem and Roman soldiers on patrol at night, is a high spot. The whole atmosphere of that ancient time, of the strange Judaeo-Roman history, and of the birth of Christ is evoked in this music of genius with an incredible simplicity. Other outstanding portions of the remarkable score are the *Adieu des Bergers* and the transcendental *Repos de la Sainte Famille*.

The performance is at once faithful and accurate. The principal singers are all excellent. Hélène Bouvier sings the music of Mary and M. Nogéura that of Joseph. Both bring understanding and musicianship to their respective tasks. M. Giradeau, as Narrator, displays a clear high tenor, ideal for the part. André Cluytens adheres faithfully to Berlioz' directions; which is to his credit, for if ever a composer knew what he wanted and left implicit directions for doing it, it was Berlioz.

The recording is, for the most part, good. The packaging is odd. There is a lot of information about Berlioz but very little about *L'Enfance du Christ*—no text is supplied either. These are relatively minor blemishes, however. The important thing is that the work is available. W.

Purcell: *Te Deum* and Purcell: *Jubilate in D*. One side, and **Purcell: *The "Bell Anthem"* and Purcell: *O Sing Unto the Lord***. The Purcell Performing Society conducted by John Reymes King. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3027) \$5.95.

The almost feverish activity on the part of the many minor record companies as well as the considerable output of the major producers has resulted in a great number of sub-par performances being committed to discs. Nor are these mediocre performances confined to Central European tapes, for recently there has been a tendency to cut corners insofar as domestic enterprises are concerned. Excessive production without quality always means degeneracy and death, whether in men, trilobites or musical activities.

The present record is a case in point. The selection of material is superb—none of these Purcell works has been recorded before. Allegro has come up with a first rate technical job. The choice of artists is, however, regrettable. It is not that they are actually poor singers, but they are certainly not exceptional nor overly well equipped for the task set for them.

The nine members of the chorus take turns as soloist and all have a rough time with the florid passages; the resulting performance is awkward. As a chorus they are out of their depth and sing all the music in a dull, thick-toned manner that is far from impressive. The small orchestra comes off best, due primarily to the good recording; but here again there is no real spirit, no joy in the sound they give out. John Reymes King, the conductor, should be able to achieve, when one considers his background and training, a more faithful re-creation than this. W.

Mozart: *Missa Brevis in D*, K. 194. One side, and **Mozart: *Missa Brevis in C*, K. 220** ("Späzenmesse"). (Sung in Latin). Soloists with the Akademiechor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Grossmann. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7060) \$5.95.

Among the many types of music Mozart wrote none offers a wider field for speculation than his

church music. The family was very religious in a time when the general temper was one of irreligion, although the always rational Leopold, as well as his gifted son, was inclined, as Alfred Einstein very aptly observes, to draw an increasingly sharp distinction between God and His earthly representatives. Undoubtedly much of this skepticism and distrust arose from the dealings they had with the Archbishop of Salzburg, Hieronymus Colloredo. The instances of disagreement and later virtually open warfare between the young Mozart and his autocratic and overbearing employer are too well known to require repetition here.

The *Masses* here recorded are early works, written in 1774 and 1775 when Mozart was about eighteen years old. The earliest, the *Missa Brevis in D*, K. 194, is a work of considerable merit. It is scored for string orchestra without violas. There are no instrumental preludes to the various sections and the choral declamation is rapid, making the work almost terse in its conciseness. The *Missa Brevis in C*, K. 220 bears the subtitle *Spatzenmesse* (*Sparrow Mass*) and is scored in the same manner as K. 194 except for the addition of trumpets and drums. Einstein feels that the work was hastily written on order from Colloredo; and the young Wolfgang, with his usual remarkable lack of tact, dashed off a mediocre piece (for him) and sent it along.

Both works are sung splendidly by the Akademischer and the quartet of soloists, Gisela Rathauer, Elfriede Hofstädter, Leo Heppe and Walter Berry is admirable. The performances under Ferdinand Grossmann are well conceived and tastefully executed. This recording is worthy of special attention for, in addition to the extraordinary music, it is historically interesting and offers a contrasting glimpse of Mozart's manner of writing that is at once revealing and educational. The reproduction is uniformly good.



VOCAL

A Wilhelm Strienz Concert. (Sung in German). Wilhelm Strienz (basso) with the Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Hans Steinkopf. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7026) \$5.95.

In a record that is a curious hodge-podge, basso Wilhelm Strienz gives lie to the statement made in these columns several months ago that his voice was gone. What went wrong with the recording on that occasion is difficult to understand, for the present Urania disc, while far from first class technically, still manages to reproduce the veteran basso's rich voice with reasonable verisimilitude.

The "recital" opens with a fine performance of Loewe's wonderful *Der Nöck*. The accompaniment by the Radio Berlin Orchestra, while artistically incorrect, is justified by the results—it is a thrilling experience. There follows a brace of drinking songs,

one by Nicolai (he of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*) and the other by (of all people) Robert Schumann. Both offer Herr Strienz an opportunity to explore his lower register, which he does most effectively. Next are two operatic arias, *In diesen heil'gen Hallen* from "Die Zauberflöte" and *Vecchia zimarra* from "La Bohème" in a somewhat clumsy German translation. Turning over, one is treated to *La calunnia* ("The Barber of Seville") in German. This is followed by the thoroughly delightful finale to *Der Barbier von Bagdad* wherein the soloist is joined by Hans Nissen and the Radio Berlin Chorus. The *Trinklied* from "Die Lustigen Weiber vom Windsor" comes next and is followed, somewhat unnecessarily, by two insignificant songs from motion pictures Strienz has made.

The orchestra and chorus under Hans Steinkopf supply excellent accompaniments and Strienz is in fine voice. As mentioned, this disc is musically nondescript, really good items being sandwiched in between some very ordinary selections. The *Barbier von Bagdad* excerpt and *Der Nöck* however, almost justify the issue. The notes supplied may be considered superfluous, so poor is their quality. W.

Schubert: Die Schöne Müllerin, Op. 25. Martial Singher (baritone) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1114) \$5.95.

Die Schöne Müllerin was composed in 1823 and the hundred and twenty years that have passed only serve to heighten the feeling, (if that were necessary) that in the two great song cycles Schubert reached the acme of his genius. *Die Winterreise* has been recorded three times on LP, but this is the first time the earlier of the two has been available on long-playing records.

Of the twenty *lieder* that comprise the cycle, many are familiar, such as the popular *Wohin?* and *Unge-duld*; but all are songs of great charm and exquisite melody. Schubert has been reproached because of the fact that eight of the twenty songs are strophic, with vocal and piano parts unaltered. There have been those who have taken Schubert to task for his "laziness." Surely critical ineptitude could go no farther.

Martial Singher comes to the task of recording the cycle well equipped. He has a fine baritone, capable of expression and a wide variety of coloring. His obvious sympathy with the music and his sure artistry make this one of the finest *lieder* performances on records. With Singher's near perfect projection of the songs and Paul Ulanowsky's sensitive and revealing accompaniments, this is a record that can be unreservedly recommended.

The German texts have been supplied and, while no bands separate the individual songs, this can be overlooked in the interests of economy, for if they had been included the twenty songs never could have been put on one 12" disc. Technically the recording is good, even that *bête noire* of recording engineers, the piano, sounding very well indeed. W.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 ♪ Indicates 45 rpm.

Offenbach: Le Mariage aux Lanternes ("A Marriage by Lantern Light"). (Sung in English). Soloists with orchestra conducted by Fritz Kramer. 1-12" disc (*MAGIC-TONE MLP-1005) \$4.

Jacques Offenbach, whom Rossini once aptly described as "the Mozart of the Champs Elysées," got his start, as it were, by becoming first a conductor and later manager of a small Parisian theatre. In December of 1855 he took over the small "Théâtre Comte," re-named it the "Bouffes Parisiens" and produced a succession of his own operettas which became immensely popular. It was during this time that he wrote and produced *Le Mariage aux Lanternes* (1858). Offenbach was one of the most prolific of composers, writing some ninety pieces over a period of twenty-five years! In view of this high output it is not surprising that some of them are the veriest trifles.

Le Mariage aux Lanternes is such a work—a little divertissement of a half hour's duration, and as such is a little gem. It has hardly more plot than a vaudeville sketch, but some delightful tunes are strung together to make the whole affair quite persuasive. The orchestra consists of a violin, a flute and a piano with an organ making its appearance towards the end. A pair of sopranos, a tenor and a mezzo sing little songs, a duet or two in a very engaging manner. And that is all. As Peter, Lawrence Chelsi sings well and with excellent diction. Evelyn McGarity is Denise and displays a pure light soprano ideally suited to the part. Also above average vocally are the two widows sung by Virginia Thomas and Betty Wolf.

The English lyrics, which by the way are very good, were written by William Kaye and the performance is under the direction of Fritz Kramer. The recording is first-rate and the surfaces are quiet.

W.

PIANO



Beethoven: Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 26 in E-flat, Op. 81a** ("Les Adieux"). Rudolf Serkin (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4432) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 24 in F-sharp minor, Op. 78 and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 9 in E, Op. 14, No. 1**. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 31 in A-flat, Op. 110**. Kurt Appelbaum (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5090) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 11 in B-flat, Op. 22. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2** ("Moonlight"). Kurt Appelbaum (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5078) \$5.95.

It won't be long now until all thirty-two of the Beethoven Piano Sonatas are available on LP discs—at this writing there are only nine missing. If they

are as well-played and recorded as the ones on the three discs listed above, no one will have any cause to complain. Kurt Appelbaum is apparently planning to record all of the Sonatas. His previous recordings in the series met with fine critical approval, and we are very sure that his many admirers will be highly pleased with the present releases.

Serkin has chosen two of the most popular Sonatas for his present LP disc. It would seem to us that there is little question but that his record will be one of the most popular ones to be issued this month.

Dohnanyi: (4) Rhapsodies, Op. 11. One and half sides, and **Weiner: Hungarian Peasant Songs, Op. 22**. Miklos Schwalb (piano). 1-12" disc (*ACADEMY ALP-301) \$5.95.

Brahms: Waltzes, Op. 39. One side, and **J. Strauss—arr. Dohnanyi: Der Zigeunerbaron—Treasure Waltz and J. Strauss—arr. Dohnanyi: Die Fledermaus—Du und Du Waltz**. Miklos Schwalb (piano). 1-12" disc (*ACADEMY ALP-302) \$5.95.

Czerny: (6) Etudes and Clementi: (4) Etudes. One side, and **Cramer: (13) Etudes**. Miklos Schwalb (piano). 1-12" disc (*ACADEMY ALP 303) \$5.95.

The Hungarian pianist, Miklos Schwalb, a former pupil of Ernst Dohnanyi and Leo Weiner and now of the faculty of the New England Conservatory of Music, seems to believe in playing music that may be easily enjoyed by any discerning music lover, if we may judge by the tuneful and pleasing selections to be found on these three LP discs. We do not wish to suggest that his choice of material to record is trite; quite the contrary, it is all worthy of serious consideration, yet it makes mighty pleasant listening. For a couple of hours of delightful piano music these discs are strongly recommended. The reproduction is excellent throughout and the surfaces of the discs smooth and quiet.

Copland: Four Piano Blues. Aaron Copland (piano). One side, and **Barber: Adagio for Strings, Op. 11**. Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. And **Bloch: From Jewish Life—Prayer; Jewish Song; Supplication**. Zara Nelsova (violinello) accompanied by Ernest Bloch (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-298) \$4.95.

We can see no reason for placing these several pieces on one LP disc except that they were all written in the present century. We can see no connection between Bloch's meditative and somber selections in the Hebraic mood with Copland's four piano "blues" each written with a particular pianist in mind (Smit, Földes, Kapell and Kirkpatrick). Certainly Barber's *Adagio* is in no way related to either of the above compositions. However, this music is worthy of being recorded and if enough persons are found who will be interested in all of it, the present disc may enjoy a reasonable sale.

Chopin: Nocturnes (complete). Artur Rubinstein (piano). 10-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1570) \$12.06. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6005) \$11.44.

Chopin: Preludes, Op. 28. Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 4-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1549) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1150) \$5.72.

The great advantage of LP records is brought forcefully to our attention when we note the great amount of Chopin music that has been placed on three LP discs that take up much less than one inch on your record shelf. Here we have the nineteen nocturnes and the twenty-four preludes of Opus 28 superbly played by two outstanding artists and most faithfully reproduced on three LP discs with smooth silent surfaces.

Encores. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 4-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1558) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1153) \$5.72.

Rubinstein has selected for this collection a number of short pieces that have been popular with his audiences all over the world. If you would like to have this great artist play a group of selections that are familiar ones, this item is for you. The pieces are: *Liebestraum*, No. 3 (Liszt); *Spinning Song*, Op. 67, No. 4 (Mendelssohn); *Nocturne in E-flat*, Op. 9, No. 2 (Chopin); *Valse oubliée*, No. 1 (Liszt); *Impromptu in A-flat*, Op. 90, No. 4 (Schubert); *La plus que lente* (Debussy); *Prelude in C-sharp minor*, Op. 3, No. 2 (Rachmaninoff); and *Impromptu in C-sharp minor*, Op. 66 (Chopin).

Scarlatti: (11) Sonatas. Clara Haskil (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5072) \$5.95.

We do not know why Westminster listed these works as "11 Sonatas" by Domenico Scarlatti. One would think that they were a special group of eleven sonatas. However, this is not the case. Apparently Miss Haskil just selected eleven that suited her fancy from the 545 listed in the Longo catalog. Some of these have been recorded before but several of them seem to be appearing on discs for the first time. Using the Longo numbering, Miss Haskil has chosen the following for this LP record: Nos. 33, 142, 171, 255, 256, 278, 386, 388, 457, 475, and 483.

VIOLONCELLO

Bloch: From Jewish Life—Prayer; Jewish Song; Supplication. Zara Nelsova (violoncello) accompanied by Ernest Bloch (piano). And **Barber Adagio for Strings, Op. 11.** Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. One side, and **Copland: Four Piano Blues.** Aaron Copland (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-298) \$4.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under PIANO.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CFS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, FEST—Festival, HS—Hadyon Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PLM—Polymusic, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 11

JANUARY, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

REVIEWING phonograph records is, to say the least, a job of great variety. When a batch of records arrives at the studio one never knows what he will find. Of course, the great majority of them are recordings of music—the music of the ages from all parts of the world. However, during the last twenty years this reviewer has had to consider a vast number of recordings that had nothing whatever to do with music—sound effect records for the stage and the radio, recordings of speeches and lectures by the great leaders and thinkers of this century, nature study records on which have been recorded bird calls and the sound of insects, recordings of heart beats made in one of our great medical clinics for the study and diagnosis of pathological conditions of the heart, a set of records to measure the musical aptitude of individual children, records for the study of practically every important foreign language, and many more odd recordings of great variety. There is always something new and challenging in this business of reviewing phonograph records.

A week or so ago an LP record arrived labeled "Christopher Recordings on Sex Instruction—A Helpful guide to parents." On the front cover of the envelope it was stated that "These recordings help solve the delicate and often embarrassing problem which faces every parent—dramatized with reverent frankness and spiritual beauty." We felt that it was part of our job at least to listen to part of this recording. We expected to find a highly sentimental story of the bees and the flowers or some dramatized sketches that were aimed at whetting the appetite of those who have a morbid curiosity about matters of sex. If we had read the notes that accompany this recording and learned that it was issued by The Christophers, that great movement that was founded by a Roman

Catholic priest, Fr. James Keller, M.M., and numbers among its supporters thousands of persons of all creeds and races, we would have realized that here was something that rated serious consideration.

This recording is divided into four sections: "How Babies are Born" (for young children); "Menstruation" (for girls 10-12); "Problems of Growing Boys" (for boys 11-13); and "The Marriage Union" (for teen-agers). It is not intended that children shall hear these recorded sketches; they are for parents only. It is supposed that parents will take the ideas suggested and give them to their children in their own words.

This is another service of The Christophers, whose headquarters are at 18 East 48th Street, New York 17, N. Y. An album of four 78 rpm discs is available at \$6 or a 12-inch LP disc at \$4. Both the album and the LP disc contain all four sections of this remarkable recording. These records are being subsidized by The Christophers thus the very modest prices.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Brahms: Concerto No. 2 in B-flat for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 83. Vladimir Horowitz with NBC Symphony Orchestra—Toscanini. 1-12" disc. (*V-LCT-1025) \$5.72. (TNR Mar. '45).

Beethoven: *Concerto No. 4 in G for Piano and Orchestra*, Op. 58. Artur Rubinstein with Royal Philharmonic Orchestra—Beecham. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1032) \$5.72. (TNR Apr. '50).

ORCHESTRA



Debussy: *La Mer*. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 3-7" discs in box (6V-WDM-1583) \$3.99. Coupled with *Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream*. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. (TNR Jan. '49). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1221) \$5.72.

Debussy: *La Mer*. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. One side, and Debussy: *Iberia* (Images, Set III, No. 2). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4434) \$5.45.

La Mer has been recorded several times before by Toscanini, but was never released because the conductor would not approve any of the recordings. This being the fourth try, it made the grade, as well it might, for the NBC Orchestra under Toscanini had been playing it time and again on tour. Their performance is for us a curiosity so typical of recordings—it is perfect beyond description but is not a moving experience. You are not likely to hear *La Mer* played with more subtlety, finer shadings of tone, or a more refined exposition of the score. When it is all finished you are sure you have heard remarkable playing, and you will recall too that you were not moved by the music. The sea is impassioned and unpredictable; here it shows itself to be displeased with conductor Toscanini's ruling hand by never fully revealing its mighty glories in this performance.

Mitropoulos is not the greatest interpreter of familiar scores—he is strangely convincing and excellent in modern music or unfamiliar older music—but his very flamboyance often gives the sea a more natural profile in his version of *La Mer*. Mitropoulos' is about the most exciting *La Mer* on LP. Ansermet has the most poetic version with a fair amount of excitement and the utmost in what we would call a stylish playing of this Debussy masterpiece. Andre and Rodzinski each have valid conceptions of the music on LP discs, the former does not have quite the imagination or quite the orchestra of some of these other versions, while the latter has often too symphonic an idea of the score in the manner of Toscanini. The selection of a *La Mer* is no simple matter at this point with five possible choices.

The choice of a *La Mer* carries with it the problem of choosing which coupling you would like. Four of the versions are on one side of a 12" disc with these couplings: Andre has Ravel's *Rhapsodie Espagnole*, Ansermet has Ravel's *Mother Goose Suite*, the others are as listed above. Toscanini's *Midsum-*

mer Night's Dream of the six best sections of the suite was previously reviewed in these pages, at which time we found it very lovely. Ormandy's recording of *Iberia* provides a choice coupling for Mitropoulos' *La Mer* by offering another colorful work from the same composer. The Philadelphia Orchestra's playing in this suite is remarkable for color and precision, and Ormandy gets a goodly amount of the perfumes of this music in his rendition. Of all the discs we have mentioned in this review, the best reproduction is to be found on the Columbia *La Mer* and *Iberia*. S.

Respighi: *Trittico Botticelliano* ("Botticelli Triptych"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. One side, and Locatelli: *Concerto da Camera for String Orchestra and Piano*. Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-418) \$5.95.

Here is a pair of interesting and worth while works new to discs. The Respighi appealed to us particularly. It has some of the flavor of his marvelous suite *The Birds*, and is also similar in idea to another favorite, Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler*—similar in idea. *Trittico Botticelliano* means Botticelli Triptych and refers to three paintings by the 15th century Italian Renaissance master, Botticelli. This musical evocation is therefore similar to Hindemith's work and even to Moussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. (It has more musical affinity with Moussorgsky's work than with Hindemith's). The *Trittico* is in three movements, each movement or panel corresponding to one painting. The first panel is *La Primavera* (Spring), and is a nature painting—the very opening of which is reminiscent of *The Birds*, with string sections playing interlocking trills. The second movement is *L'Adorazione dei Magi* (The Adoration of the Kings), in which the religious mood is enhanced by the use of ecclesiastical modes; in fact, it is built on a tune which will be recognized as the hymn tune "Veni Emmanuel," an advent hymn. Finally we have *La Nascita Di Venere* (The Birth of Venus), an imaginative and literal transcription of the painting. We found this music wholly enjoyable and recommend it highly as a fine symphonic poem.

An earlier Italian master, Pietro Locatelli, was an instrumentalist of note, being a virtuoso violinist. Working in the tradition of Corelli, Torelli, and Vivaldi, he enriched the repertory of the Concerto Grosso. The *Concerto da Camera* for string orchestra and piano is an excellent example of the Italian Chamber Concerto of the early 18th century. Like the Sonata, from which it evolved, the concerto of the period was named according to its place of performance. Those written for the church were entitled *Concerti da Chiesa* (Church Concerti), while those composed for performance in a drawing room or salon were called *Concerti da Camera* (Chamber Concerti).

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{4}$ rpm.
 ♂ indicates 45 rpm.

The present one is a freely ordered series of dance-derived movements, similar in this respect to the Suite. It is about what you would expect, and of course, easy and pleasant to listen to.

Both these works are splendidly performed under Litschauer's direction, and well recorded—typical good foreign tapes. The timbre, balance, and perspective are all pleasing and lifelike. A very fine disc in every respect. S.

Egk: French Suite. Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra conducted by Werner Egk. One side, and **Egk: Geigenmusik** (Divertimento for Violin and Orchestra). Elisabeth Bischoff (violin) with the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Werner Egk. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7022) \$5.95.

Werner Egk, born in 1901 in Auchsesheim, Bavaria, is well known as both a composer and conductor. His list of compositions includes several operas, an oratorio, festival music, and works for orchestra. Conducting posts in Bavaria as well as in Berlin, in both symphonic and operatic fields, have won him a wide reputation. As a conductor he shows himself to be a highly accomplished one in this recording of his own music, and he gets vigorous playing from these distinguished orchestras.

As a composer, we are meeting him for the first time in any large scale works. His music is not what we would call original; rather it seems to be a combination of several modern tendencies in writing woven through a generally romantic base. The *French Suite*, composed in 1950, is a set of five orchestral mood pieces, each based on a reminiscence of a particular Rameau harpsichord composition. This is not a transcription—not Rameau in modern orchestral dress. No effort is made to retain the rhythmic, harmonic or atmospheric flavor of the originals. Melodic fragments from Rameau, sufficient to recall a blurred memory of the original, drift through these modern mood fantasies. We found the music clever and interesting. At times the treatment was obvious, nearly trite, and a little too jazzy; but all in all we liked it, and found it quite diverting.

Geigenmusik is a violin concerto in divertimento style, and derives its melodic sustenance from the folk music of the composer's native Bavaria. The first movement is composed chiefly of virtuoso violin effects; a few lyrical passages are thrown in, but it is mostly vigorous writing for the solo instrument. The second movement is slow rhapsodic music of a largely romantic character. The finale is designed to be a "killer" with the audience. It is glittering with catchy, popular-like phrases, and more of the jazzy-slanted effects of Mr. Egk. All in all it is a pleasant twenty minutes of fiddling with clever orchestral backing. Miss Bischoff handles the violin part with proper dash and flair. The reproduction throughout this disc is excellent. The music is hardly designed to be serious so if you find it entertaining, it will have answered its purpose well. S.

Mozart: Serenade No. 11 in E-flat, K. 375. One side, and **Mozart: Serenade No. 12 in C minor, K. 388.** Kell Chamber Players conducted by Reginald Kell. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9540) \$5.85.

Mozart: Serenade No. 7 in D, K. 250 ("Haffner"). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6850) \$5.95.

The recording of Mozart Cassations, Divertimentos, and Serenades has now reached the proportions where we have duplications of many of the works. The present disc by Decca even has the same coupling as a recently issued Westminster disc with the Vienna Philharmonic wind players. Scored for an octet of horns, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons in pairs, this pair of serenades is more properly chamber music. Chamber music devotees will have a trying time selecting the better recording, Decca or Westminster, for in this case we have two groups of first rank artists playing with uncommon devotion and also with precision, finish, and style. The reproduction is good in both cases, a shade warmer in Westminster, a bit clearer in Decca. Mr. Kell, by the way, does not play clarinet in this octet, he conducts the group, a role for which he is well equipped from past experience, notably with the BBC in England.

Our old friend Clemens Krauss turns up again, with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, to do the lengthy *Serenade No. 7*, subtitled "Haffner." The heading atop the manuscript is "Serenade for the wedding of Mr. Spath with Miss Elisabeth Haffner, by Mr. Amadeus Wolfgang Mozart;" it was performed on the twenty-first of July, the evening before the wedding. The entire serenade shows a consistent effort to sparkle and be festive and graceful. It is in eight movements, and contains three minuets. Mozart was writing music expressive of his feeling for the Haffners, his patrons, and music fitting for the happy occasion. The first, sixth, seventh, and eighth movements of this serenade were, with minor alterations and rearrangements, at one time printed by Breitkopf & Hartel as Mozart's Symphony No. 8. Structurally, the Mozartian serenade is a symphony form embellished with added movements. The "Haffner" No. 7 is a particularly fine serenade, and Clemens Krauss performs it with a traditional touch, graceful but not too frivolous. A performance worthy of the royalty for whom it was originally intended. The reproduction is good. S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Joseph Keilberth. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8153) \$4.98.

The brilliant young Czech conductor, Joseph Keilberth, has received praise before in these columns, and he is due for the greatest measure yet, for his magnificent rendition of the *Brahms First Symphony*. Here is the ideal example of a man with a deeply-felt and rather personal idea of the music, who plays it that way, and yet who never gets capricious with it or gets it out of shape. His convictions are

so just that he does no malice to the score. It is a performance that is very communicative—you feel every bar just the way the conductor does. This is probably the most unhurried performance ever recorded, yet it does not seem to drag. He is aided by exceptionally fine playing by the Berlin Philharmonic in one of their best post-war recordings. The reproduction we found to be pleasing in timbre and balance with a very natural sounding quality. The LP was evidently not made from a tape as one or two breaks are a tiny bit noticeable.

Other LP versions of the Brahms *First* include a good solid performance by Rodzinski and the New York Philharmonic and one by Stokowski and the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra which is a reasonably straight performance of very lush orchestral sound. All three of these versions differ noticeably in approach and in final results. We would hesitate to recommend one version entirely over the others, for each has merits—more or less according to your personal taste and idea of how this symphony should sound. A work of this magnitude can stand several different approaches if they are reasonably accurate, and these all are. "The greatest first symphony ever written" is faring well on LP; let succeeding versions be as good. S.

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite No. 1, Op. 71a.

One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite No. 2.** L'Orchestre de la Societe des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-441) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite No. 1, Op. 71a.

One side, and **Chopin: Les Sylphides.** Royal Opera House Orchestra (Covent Garden) conducted by Hugo Rignold. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9550) \$5.85.

The number of recordings of *The Nutcracker Suite* on LP is rapidly approaching a round dozen and, although it would seem less than necessary to add to them at this time, there is some justification for the releases under consideration. First, London has displayed what is almost unique in the record industry—intelligence. Instead of backing the well-known Tchaikovsky work with something entirely out of keeping, they have supplied a *second* suite from the same ballet. (Other record manufacturers please copy.) The music of the second collection from *The Nutcracker* is less dependent on striking instrumentation and special effects; as a result, it is fresh and charming and provides delightful pleasure for the ear.

Decca's presentation of the traditional *Nutcracker Suite*, with *Les Sylphides* as companion piece, if less logical, is done with reason: both ballet suites are presented in *tempi* usually associated with these ballets in *performance* as opposed to the usual concert-hall pace. While we find this approach interesting, the resultant dragging of the beat makes the music rather listless and pedestrian. It was a noble experiment, but hardly worth the effort.

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14. L'Orchestre des Concerts Colonne conducted by Paul Paray. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6950) \$5.95.

Numerous recordings have been made of the *Symphonie Fantastique* and the best of them has generally been considered to be Monteux's; his was the only one on LP until now. With the new Paray reading we think Monteux has met his match. Paul Paray is a sensitive conductor with a great deal of imagination and a reasonably sound musical judgment to balance it. He is excellent in such music as this symphony. In his interpretation of the *Fantastique*, Paray shows his finest qualities with a performance as knowing, as colorful and as convincing as any we have heard. We would not say it is superior to Monteux's, but a comparison shows it to be the equal, at least; and on our machine the reproduction of the Paray disc was clearer and brighter than the Monteux disc. The reproduction has exceptional definition and profile; the timbre of certain instruments being unusually realistic. We can give this disc a hearty recommendation.

The *Symphonie Fantastique* demonstrates the genius of Berlioz most forcibly. Weber and others had composed program music, even Beethoven had, but the *Fantastique* is the work that really set off the school of program music. No composer up to Berlioz had showed anything like his instinct for the orchestra; none had bound his music with a story to such an extent. There was no precedent for it. Beethoven and Schubert, but a few years dead, had never conceived anything like it; neither had their predecessors; and the romantics had not yet come on the scene. The sounds of the *Fantastique*, and their relation to a program that was supplied by the composer, were novel and daring. The program of the symphony, which deals with a young musician in love, is well known, and we will only state that Paray fully realizes the story in a performance we consider outstanding. S.

Franck: Psyché. Linz Bruckner Symphony Orchestra conducted by L. G. Jochum. One side, and **Berlioz: Les Francs Juges Overture, Op. 6.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Sergiu Celibidache. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7024) \$5.95.

Psyché is a musical treatment of an ancient Greek myth, with the pattern of other old legends: love found, love lost, love regained. It is a pretty story, and for it Franck, at the height of his creative powers, wrote very pretty music. There is a tenderness about the music that makes it at times almost fragile; and there is always a ravishing loveliness that becomes the story of idyllic love with a beauty perfectly befitting—a beauty equal to that created by any of the romantic composers. It is odd that this music is not more frequently performed. The usual concert suite, with choral sections omitted, is presented on this recording. It is performed with genuine feeling by L. G. Jochum and the orchestra,

who manage many passages of surpassing beauty. The Linz Bruckner Symphony is not one of the finest and best disciplined orchestras around today, but it plays with a general style and finish that overshadow some of the minor rough edges.

Berlioz' overture which occupies the other side of this disc, is his earliest work to remain in the repertoire. Composed in 1827, when he was 24 years old, it is the overture to an opera never performed, although some of its ideas were used and developed in later compositions. While Berlioz sought to paint a somewhat gruesome picture with this overture, it can be approached as a piece of absolute music with just as enjoyable results. It is not equal to his later masterpieces, but it contains much that is effective and exciting, with some notably fine brass passages. It receives a satisfactory performance under Celibidache and is well recorded. Both selections on this disc appear for the first time on LP. S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 73. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1065) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1173) \$5.72.

Chausson: Symphony in B-flat, Op. 20. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1582) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1181) \$5.72.

An evaluation of the Brahms *Second Symphony* in any new recording is always a difficult job for us because of a nostalgic feeling for the *Second* recorded some years ago by Beecham. This is, to us, so clearly the finest of all performances of this work that it is a criterion. The elusive qualities of the sweet and fragrant *Second* were captured perfectly by the great English conductor, never pushed too hard, but always revealed in their perfect beauty. Rodzinski came quite close to this in his performance, now on LP; Monteux has always been rather close to it. Monteux has a more individual approach, one that is convincing and typical of his sensitive art. If it errs in this instance, it is in the direction of being a bit too obvious with cares of detail. Beecham is surely mighty careful, but he is never obvious with his care. Of the several versions now on the LP lists, we believe most folks will prefer the present set by Monteux because it is a fine playing of the score and because it is the best reproduction. Many would find it worth while to try the Rodzinski disc, if the reproduction is satisfactory (having heard it the other day on an FM broadcast we found it very good) it may also prove to be more Brahmsian as a performance.

The Chausson *Symphony* is always associated with the Franck *Symphony* for there are many similarities. A three-movement work in cyclic form, it is notable for its simplicity, its melancholy, and its sustained beauty. Monteux has been a consistent champion of the work. Another man who programs it frequently has also made the other LP recording

of it—Mitropoulos. Mitropoulos has dug into the score and offers no superficial treatment. He has not the Gallic grace and finesse of Monteux, a quality much more becoming to the Chausson than to the Brahms noted above. The reproduction of the newer Monteux is to be preferred to the Minneapolis recording by Columbia, which is lacking in resonance. We would therefore recommend Monteux for the Chausson opus without much hesitation.

S.

Gershwin: An American in Paris. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. One side, and **Gershwin: Rhadsody in Blue.** Alec Templeton (piano) with Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4455) \$5.45.

Gershwin: An American in Paris. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-7" discs in folder (øV-WDM-1657) \$2.56.

Gershwin: An American in Paris. MGM Studio Orchestra conducted by Johnny Green. One side, and **Gershwin: Songs.** Gene Kelly and Georges Guetary (vocals) with the MGM Studio Orchestra conducted by Johnny Green. 4-10" discs in album (MGM-93) \$4.35. 4-7" discs in box (øMGM-K-93) \$3.92. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-93) \$3.

A motion picture, recently released by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios, entitled "An American in Paris" has managed, besides delighting audiences everywhere and getting itself on the ten-best list of the year, to revive interest in a composer who typifies a period when America hadn't a care in the world—George Gershwin. In addition to the disc released by M-G-M in conjunction with the film, both Columbia and Victor have found occasion to issue new releases of Gershwin's work of the same name. Andre Kostelanetz gives us the full treatment in his rendition and also offers "Rhadsody in Blue" as companion piece. A good buy for those who want to add Gershwin to their collection. The Victor version will please Toscanini fans but does nothing to further the composer's fame. MGM's disc, a delightful reminder for those who have seen the film, offers, in addition to a rousing and catchy arrangement of "An American," some Gershwin songs pleasingly intoned by Gene Kelly and Georges Guetary. They include: 'S Wonderful; Love is Here to Stay; I'll Build a Stairway to Paradise; and I Got Rhythm.

Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4433) \$5.45.

A popular symphony, and one whose popularity is growing, is here given its most glowing recorded performance. There is a noticeable difference between this reading and the other LP version, by Mitropoulos. Ormandy is, of course, more lush with the most lavish display of gorgeous orchestral richness and coloring. It is played with about as much

drive as Mitropoulos summons, but with even greater smoothness and much larger scale dynamic range. This is truly a sumptuous feast of orchestral color which anyone who likes juicy symphonic music can enjoy over and over again. The reproduction is of the best.

The Philadelphians play Rachmaninoff's music with a special warmth and affection, for there are many men in the orchestra who were there when the master himself conducted the orchestra, including the American premiere of this very same *Second Symphony* in 1909. Rachmaninoff made no bones about the fact that he considered the Philadelphia the finest orchestra in the world, and he always loved to play as piano soloist with it.

Rachmaninoff showed an emotional side that he had previously concealed in other compositions, and there was greater technical skill too, in the *Second Symphony*. This emotional quality is apparent throughout all four movements of the work; it would be hard to single out any particular sections. The finale, an *allegro vivace*, is a masterly and thrilling movement which has its own great themes as well as a summing up of some themes from previous movements. The second subject is a lyric beauty, doubly fine for the contrast it provides to the boisterous opening theme. The extended coda of this movement weaves together fragments from the first and fourth movements and ends with a triumphant, exhilarating reiteration of the lyrical second theme, played by the full orchestra. This is certainly the very finest quality of new wine in the most beautiful of old bottles—a romantic masterpiece. S.

Tati-Tati (Symphonic Paraphrases on "Chopsticks"). Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4480) \$5.45.

In 1877 the Russian composer Alexander Borodin composed a piece to play with his little adopted daughter—the child's part was played with one finger of each hand and was the tune that we know as "Chopsticks." It attracted the attention of several of his Russian colleagues, and Cui, Liadov and Rimsky-Korsakov each wrote several paraphrases on the tune. The *Paraphrases* were published in 1879 and they came to the attention of Franz Liszt. This great Hungarian virtuoso and composer was so impressed with them that he contributed a "paraphrase" of his own to be added to the group. In 1937, Nicolas Tcherepnin freely transcribed some of them for orchestra and the balance were orchestrated in 1951 by Werner Janssen. It is these orchestral transcriptions by both Tcherepnin and Janssen that are contained on the present LP disc. You will find it interesting and amusing music—an item that is certainly out of the beaten track. It is given a spirited performance by the Columbia Symphony Orchestra under the brilliant direction of one of its transcribers.

Curtain Time. Morton Gould (piano) and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4451) \$5.45.

Morton Gould has chosen selections from eight popular musical plays of the last two decades for this attractive disc—excellent for the cocktail hour or for dinner music. He starts off with *Poor Pierrot* from "The Cat and the Fiddle" and concludes with *So in Love* from "Kiss Me, Kate."

CONCERTO



Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30. Vladimir Horowitz (piano) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1575) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1178) \$5.72.

Rachmaninoff: Rhadsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43. William Kapell (piano) with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra (Philadelphia) conducted by Fritz Reiner. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1576) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-126) \$4.72.

In April 1951 when we reviewed the Malcuzyński recording of the *Third Concerto* we found it to be excellent but advised waiting until Victor issued the Rachmaninoff-Philadelphia Orchestra recording on LP in their Treasury Series, having just issued the second and fourth concertos. We suggested, if Victor did not issue the Rachmaninoff version, getting the Malcuzyński recording as a very acceptable substitute. We are inclined to agree with that advice even now. Horowitz plays the *Third* for a brilliant and percussive display piece, more so than in his earlier recording of the work, and far more than in Rachmaninoff's own performance. Victor has matched this brittle and percussive quality with reproduction that spotlights the clanging, hard, and at times almost tinny sounds which emerge from Horowitz' piano. This close-to type of microphoning is most uncomplimentary to Horowitz' rendition of Rachmaninoff's *Third Concerto*, and may account for our reserved opinion of this disc as much as Horowitz' actual playing of the music. Reiner's orchestral accompaniment is well played and well adjusted to the soloist, but adds nothing to the subtlety of the music, as does the Philadelphia Orchestra accompaniment referred to above. We still think Victor should reissue the Rachmaninoff version, and if they don't, the Malcuzyński disc is preferable.

William Kapell has previously recorded with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra another work of Rachmaninoff, the *Second Concerto*. Both the concerto and the rhapsody are in the Victor catalog by Rubinstein. As in the case of the concerto, the rhapsody is even more brilliant in Kapell's hands, if lacking a bit of the songful quality we associate with Rubinstein. Considering the excellence of the Rubinstein performance, as well as its public acceptance, it seems a needless thing to issue this new Kapell version. It rather serves to prove the point that the

* indicates LP 33 1/4 rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

major companies stick to the standard repertoire while the smaller labels dig for lesser known works. Since Kapell has little new to say in the *Rhapsody*, neither do we, and will only advise you that the reproduction is quite good and not as clangy as that accorded to Horowitz in the concerto. S.

Viotti: Concerto No. 22 in A minor for Violin and Orchestra. One and one-half sides, and **Nardini: Concerto in E minor for Violin and Orchestra.** Peter Rybar (violin) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Dahinden. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5049) \$5.95.

Here is an LP disc of more than usual interest. It will bring to the attention of American music lovers two 18th century Italian composer-violinists who are practically unknown in this country. Of prime importance is Giovanni Battista Viotti (1753-1824) who has been called "the father of modern violin-playing" and who was the first to write violin concertos in the broad modern sonata-form. His *Concerto in A minor*, recorded so splendidly on the present disc, is a fine example of his music. We predict that many of our readers will find this a work well worth their serious consideration. The shorter concerto by Pietro Nardini (1722-1793), a pupil of Tartini's with whom he lived until the latter's death, is a pleasing little trifle that fills very nicely the remaining space on the second side of this unusual LP disc.

Spohr: Concerto in F minor for Clarinet and Orchestra. Franz Hammerla (clarinet) with the Linz Bruckner Symphony Orchestra conducted by L. G. Jochum. One side, and **Spohr: Quartet Concerto, Op. 131.** Linz Bruckner Symphony Orchestra conducted by L. G. Jochum. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7021) \$5.95.

A pair of major works by Spohr is a highly welcome addition to the growing LP catalogs. We have always enjoyed Spohr's music, though rarely performed. Spohr was not a titan, but his place in musical history is secure, being an important figure in the post-Beethoven tradition. Many feel that a little of his music goes a long way, but that is true of plenty of other composers—most of whom did not have a gift of singing melody comparable to Spohr's. His gifts as a melodist are no less than his ability to write compositions soundly constructed and to score them effectively. The present disc offers two ingratiating and enjoyable works, well played and recorded. Here is more than three-quarters of an hour of music that will help banish your cares and worries—just lovely music, every bar of it.

The *Quartet Concerto* uses a string quartet as a "solo" with orchestra, and Spohr avoids display passages for the solo violin, an instrument for which he could write brilliantly, being the greatest violin virtuoso of his day. The *Quartet Concerto* is a deeply felt and rather serious work, not a flashy concerto. Many composers (Mozart, Beethoven, Bohuslav Mar-

tinu, and others) have used this form, but none with a more thoughtful effect than Spohr.

The *Clarinet Concerto in F minor* is without opus number and has not been published. Spohr wrote four concerti for clarinet and orchestra of which two are well known, the first in C minor, Op. 26 and the second in E flat, Op. 57. Why the present one has been neglected we would not know, for it deserves a place in the rather limited repertoire for that instrument. It is gratefully written for the clarinet and, as a concerto should, it poses formidable problems for the soloist. The maximum virtuosity is lavished on it in this recording, and the work is effective as well as lovely to listen to—beauty is a hallmark of Spohr's compositions. If you are still interested in melody, you will greatly enjoy this disc, both sides. S.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 4 in G for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 58. Guiomar Novaes (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7090) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 1 in C for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 15. Heinz Schroter (piano) with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra conducted by Hans Altmann. One side, and **Haydn: Concerto in D for piano and Orchestra, Op. 21.** Rosl Schmid (piano) with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra conducted by Alfons Dressel. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10047) \$4.85.

The *Fourth Piano Concerto* is a lyric masterpiece that makes a great effect by quiet and unspectacular means, notably when compared to the *Emperor Concerto*. Many today think the *Fourth* is the greatest of Beethoven's concertos. Its attraction lies in its delicate balances, the unusual slow movement—a miracle of hushed, muted intensity—and in the jolly finale. It has beautiful proportion and deft handling of material. All that is good in the *Fourth* is realized to perfection by Guiomar Novaes and Otto Klemperer. Novaes is one of the finest pianists before the public, and her talents are suited to this concerto very well. The subtlety of her playing finds wonderful expression in Beethoven's *Fourth*, every bit of which she does with a rightness that we cannot imagine being bettered. Klemperer has supplied an accompaniment that is a masterpiece in itself, although it is always adjusted to the soloist. You could not ask for a finer performance than this one. The reproduction is good—the orchestra is excellent; the piano is a shade lacking in brightness, but the total effect is satisfactory.

The conscience of the larger record companies has continually slid into a state of (blissful or calculated) carelessness. Victor and Columbia have the Beethoven *First Concerto* on a 12" disc; now Mercury issues it on a 12" disc coupled with the Haydn *D major, Op. 21 Concerto*, and its price is \$4.85 compared to \$5.72 and \$5.45 respectively of the others. The first two movements fit on one side, the third

movement and the Haydn concerto fit nicely on the reverse. The Haydn is a short concerto, notable for its wit as well as its brevity. Haydn did not write too many concertos, and of the several top ones performed today, this one is good to have on discs (it is also available in a harpsichord performance). If price is no consideration, we would probably take the Giesecking recording of the Beethoven *First* on Columbia. If you want good value, this Mercury disc offers mighty attractive performance and recording of two works at a fair price. S.

Haydn: Concerto in C for Violin and Orchestra.

Szymon Goldberg (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. One side, and **Handel: Sonata No. 4 in D.** Szymon Goldberg (violin) and Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8504) \$4.85.

Bach: Concerto No. 2 in E for Violin and Orchestra. Szymon Goldberg (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7507) \$3.85.

As there are already several LP recordings of both of these concertos, the interest in the present discs rests largely on the soloist, the distinguished Polish violinist, Szymon Goldberg. Mr. Goldberg will be remembered by record collectors for the fine series of Mozart sonatas for violin and piano which he made with the celebrated pianist, Lili Kraus. Goldberg is a student of Carl Flesch and after a decade or more devoted to recitals and appearances as soloist with symphony orchestras in Europe, he started on a world tour in 1938. After appearances in America he went to the Dutch East Indies where he was imprisoned by the Japanese and spent three years in various prison camps. At present he is living in New York, and his latest appearance in that city was at a very successful concert at Carnegie Hall in October, 1949.

The LP records listed above give music lovers a fine opportunity to appraise the art of this very excellent musician.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Quintet in G minor, K. 516. Amadeus String Quartet with Cecil Aronowitz (viola). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5086) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quartet No. 23 in F, K. 590. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 18 in A, K. 464.** Amadeus String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5092) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quartet No. 16 in E-flat, K. 428. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 17 in B-flat, K. 458** ("The Hunt"). Amadeus String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5099) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quartet No. 17 in B-flat, K. 458 ("The Hunt"). Loewenguth Quartet. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7517) \$3.85.

All of the above Mozart chamber works are al-

ready available on LP discs. Therefore the principal interest these recordings hold for us is that of the playing of the Amadeus String Quartet. This organization is made up of a group of young players—all of them in their twenties. During their student years they devoted much time to playing chamber music together and in 1947 they founded the Amadeus String Quartet. Their initial recital was given at Wigmore Hall in London early in 1948. Since then they have given a great number of successful concerts in England and on the Continent. They are regularly featured on the B. B. C. We believe that music lovers will be pleased with the bright youthful approach that they give to the lovely Mozart music on the present discs.

The last disc listed above contains the Loewenguth Quartet's version of the popular "Hunt" quartet. Here we have a seasoned performance by a group of string players who have been famous for the concerts they have given all over the world during the last two decades.

Franck: Sonata in A for Violin and Piano. Isaac Stern (violin) and Alexander Zakin (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2204) \$4.

We think that the Columbia 12-inch LP disc (*C-ML-4178), containing both the present selection and the Debussy *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, each played by Francescatti and Casadesu, is a much better buy. We are not belittling the excellent performance by Stern and Zakin but it is not worth \$4 in comparison with the above mentioned 12-incher at \$5.45.

Schubert: Quintet in C, Op. 163. Budapest String Quartet with Benar Heifetz (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4437) \$5.45.

This is the fourth version of this lovely Schubert chamber work available on LP's. In our opinion it is the best, but it might be well to compare it with the Westminster recording (*WEST-WL-5033) by the Vienna Konzerthaus players.

CHORAL



Bach: Johannes-Passion ("Passion According to St. John") (complete). (Sung in English). Adele Addison (soprano); Blanche Thebom (contralto); Leslie Chabay (tenor); Mack Harrell (baritone); Paul Matthen (basso); with the Robert Shaw Chorale, the Collegiate Chorale and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 15-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1587) \$18.34. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6103) \$17.16.

Bach's *Passion According to St. John* is here making its second appearance on LP. The previous set, by Vox, (TNR Jan. '51) was very fine and the present set, while excellent, is not notably superior.

A fine group of singers has been obtained for the performance. Miss Thebom and Miss Addison are more than equal to the demands of the music—Miss Thebom, in particular, is in splendid voice. Blake

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

Stern is an impressive Evangelist and Paul Matthen is a basso well worth hearing. Mack Harrell sings the part of Jesus in restrained fashion and with considerable beauty of voice. The chorus, as is usual with Shaw groups, is a magnificently trained unit. The RCA Orchestra, appropriately reduced in size, plays with precision and excellent tonal quality. Old instruments, such as the *viola d'amore*, lute, and *viola de gamba* have been introduced, lending an air of authenticity to the performance. A small organ is used for the *continuo*. As a final bit of evidence of all the care expended on this recording, a new and very intelligent English translation was prepared by Robert Shaw who directs the performance.

With all this expenditure of thought and time it is difficult to understand why the performance is not more impressive. The answer, to a great extent, must lie in the approach taken by Mr. Shaw. What one misses here are some of the traditional, one might also say the "extra musical qualities" that are so essential to a successful recreation.

The recording, considered from a technical angle, is of a high order, making the choice between this and the Vox set depend entirely on the approach favored by the listener. The present reviewer's opinion is obviously inclined toward the Vox recording under Grossman. In all honesty, however, it must be pointed out that this is a very personal opinion—it is strongly suggested that both versions be heard before a choice is made.

W.

Hymns of Thanksgiving. Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw, accompanied by Hugh Porter (organ). 3-7" discs in box (OV-WDM-1559) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-108) \$4.67.

No matter what the Robert Shaw Chorale decides to sing, one can be sure that he will have a highly artistic and satisfactory performance. This is abundantly true of the hymns that are recorded in this collection for Thanksgiving Day. The selections are: *O Worship the King; For the Beauty of the Earth; Praise to the Lord; O God, Beneath Thy Guiding Hand; Come, Ye Thankful People, Come; and For All the Saints.*

OPERA

Verdi: Luisa Miller (complete). (Sung in Italian). Lucy Kelston (soprano); Miti Truccato Pace (mezzo-soprano); Giacomo Lauri-Volpi (tenor); Scipione Colombo (baritone); Giacomo Vaghi (basso); with supporting soloists; EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Mario Rossi. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1221) \$17.85.

In 1848 Verdi fled from Paris to avoid the epidemic of cholera that was sweeping the city and took refuge in his newly acquired estate of Sant'Agata. Once settled down, Verdi, who had left the selection of his next opera to Salvatore Cammarano, wrote the

poet begging him to provide "a short absorbing drama with plenty of action, plenty of passion, so that I shall be able to set it easily to music." Cammarano obliged with one of his better efforts, a libretto based on Schiller's great play *Kabal und Liebe* (Intrigue and Love), entitled *Luisa Miller*.

A fine cast has been brought together for the recording. Giacomo Lauri-Volpi, who created the role of Rodolfo at the first Metropolitan performance in 1929, sings the same part in this recording and does a fine job. He sings with style and taste and Maestro Rossi seems to have been able to subdue some of the tenor's natural bumptiousness. Giacomo Vaghi, as Count Walter, is sincere and dramatically effective, if somewhat worn vocally. Scipione Colombo, who will be remembered for his fine work in *Fedora*, turns in another sterling performance as Miller, Luisa's father. A young American soprano, Lucy Kelston, is magnificent as Luisa. She is a superb dramatic soprano who sings with enthusiasm and style. Her voice, even throughout its considerable range, is large and of good timbre. Considerably more should, and probably will, be heard from this rising young artist.

As is usual when Mario Rossi is at the helm, everything goes smoothly. The uniform pacing of the performance, the meticulous attention to detail and, above all, the sheer musicianship of his conception are as distinctive as they are meritorious. There is no finer operatic conductor recording today.

Cetra's recording is to be ranged with the best they have done and thus adds considerably to the listener's enjoyment. The music will be new to the majority of American music lovers and is unreservedly recommended on all counts.

W.

Berg: Wozzeck (complete). (Sung in German). Eileen Farrell (soprano); Edwina Eustis (contralto); Frederick Jagel, David Lloyd (tenors); Mack Harrell (baritone); with the Chorus of the High School of Music and Art; the Chorus of the Schola Cantorum; and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-118) \$12.11.

Here at last is the long-awaited recording of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* as performed in concert last spring by Dimitri Mitropoulos and the N. Y. Philharmonic, together with soloists and two choruses. Minus staging and special effects, the work created an atmosphere rarely felt in concert performances of operatic works. Critical praise ran high and the event was considered a milestone in the long haul to present this controversial work to larger audiences than had hitherto been able to hear it. The Columbia Broadcasting System presented the concert as part of their regular Sunday series by the Philharmonic, thus giving it a nation-wide listening audience. It was simultaneously recorded on tape and we have it here, transferred to long playing discs, in a

memorable performance.

Most music-lovers have heard something of *Wozzeck* and its history; the condemnations and general uproar attendant on its all too few presentations in this country. The critical cry (in the early twenties) was: "Is this music!" However, thirty years have passed since Schönberg's disciple, Alban Berg, startled European musical circles with his "grisly" work; and musical tastes have changed. Nevertheless, it wasn't until last spring that any one interested in judging the work for himself had more than a teasing sample (three excerpts for soprano and orchestra). Then came the above-mentioned concert and now the records are available. We need no longer hear about *Wozzeck* at second hand.

The plot line is simplicity itself, dealing with the gradual mental and physical degradation of a simple-minded soldier by his sadistic, brutish "comrades." This also involves his sweetheart—who is no better than she should be—and after her betrayal of him, *Wozzeck's* tortured mind has reached the limit, and the tragedy one has felt impending throughout the entire work is accomplished. Although the story is fairly rudimentary, its exposition is not. The libretto is a masterpiece but, unfortunately, unless one has a good knowledge of German, it is lost to the listener because Columbia has not provided a text, contenting itself with a detailed synopsis—which is better than nothing. Berg's musical forms were carefully devised and the opera was written with the following compositions serving as the backbone: suite; rhapsody; march; passacaglia; symphony in five movements; and six inventions. A glance at this unorthodox musical line-up of operatic material might lead one to believe that *Wozzeck* is disjointed. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The characterization of the persons involved, the mounting tension, the ever-increasing sense of awful tragedy, the inevitable horror are almost unbelievably portrayed in musical sound.

We find it difficult to single out any one person in this musical undertaking as outstanding. The top-flight quality of all participants leaves nothing to be desired. We have only a word for the man who made the entire production the remarkable event it is: Bravo! Maestro Mitropoulos! H.

Verdi: *Un Giorno di Regno* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Lina Pagliughi (soprano); Laura Cozzi (mezzo-soprano); Juan Oncina (tenor); Renato Capecchi (baritone); Sesto Bruscantini (basso); with supporting soloists, ELAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Alfredo Simonetto. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1225) \$11.90.

Verdi wrote only two "comic" operas and of the two, only *Falstaff* has received critical acclaim. The other, *Un Giorno di Regno*, is now recorded for the first time and had its genesis in the most tragic circumstances imaginable. But let Verdi tell the story. "... now there began the most terrible series of

misfortunes for me. At the beginning of April my little boy fell ill . . . and the poor little fellow wasted away slowly in the arms of his mother who nearly went wild with grief. A few days later my little daughter sickened . . . and this child too was taken from us! And even this was not all . . . in June my (wife) was seized with acute encephalitis and on the 19th of June, the third coffin was carried out of my house. And in this terrible anguish of soul, to avoid breaking . . . (a) contract, I was compelled to write a comic opera!"

Un Giorno di Regno was a failure, the only fiasco over which Verdi was bitter. Certainly the work, with its echos of Rossini and Donizetti, is neither original nor humorous. It is tuneful, however, and has a surprising amount of pure animal spirit. The performance, as recorded by Cetra, is a rousing one. The indefatigable Bruscantini is a capital Baron di Kelbar; he sings, as always, with ease, consummate style and beauty of tone. Renato Capecchi as the Cavaliere di Belfiore is excellent, singing with gusto and good sense of the text. His voice is rather hard, inclined to be a bit strident at times, but it is never unmusical. Juan Oncina, the Edoardo reveals a light lyric tenor that is used with intelligence and musicianship.

On the distaff side there are two superb singers: Lina Pagliughi, of whom no more need be said than she is still one of the finest sopranos on records; and Laura Cozzi, a gifted mezzo-soprano who sings with considerable distinction. Her voice is light, pure and sweet throughout its range while her command of expression and dramatic instinct is sure.

Alfredo Simonetto directs the performance with a steady hand, pointing up the many beauties of the score and, since his work is that of an understanding and sympathetic artist, the tuneful score becomes a joy from start to finish. Quite frankly, this performance makes it difficult to understand the opera's initial failure. Good recording and a carefully prepared libretto are further evidences of the care Cetra is lavishing on its series of Verdi Celebration recordings. W.

Verdi: *Il Trovatore* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Caterina Mancini, Graziella Sciutti (sopranos); Miriam Pirazzini (mezzo-soprano); Giacomo Lauri-volpi (tenor); Carlo Tagliabue (baritone); with supporting soloists; ELAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Fernando Previtali. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1226) \$17.85.

Il Trovatore is one of those hardy musical perennials that seem able to withstand treatment that would kill most any other opera. It has been given—one can truthfully say *rendered* (from the Anglo-Saxon *rendan*, to tear apart)—innumerable times, yet a reasonably well presented performance is always effective and usually thrilling. The reasons for its popularity and longevity are not hard to find. First it is a tuneful opera—everyone knows *Stride la vampa*, the *Miserere*, *Il balen* and the *Anvil Chorus*.

Hackneyed? Possibly, but there is an indestructible quality to the score, an earthiness and a vitality that are unique in music. Verdi, at this stage of his career (writing such works as *Rigoletto*, *Ernani*, and *Macbeth*) achieved his effects by sheer strength of character and limitless melody. He had not learned, indeed had no need to learn or use the subtleties that later appear in *Aida*, *Otello* and *Falstaff*.

The present recording, the first on LP is, by and large, an odd mixture of faults and virtues. The virtues lie mostly in the direction (both literally and figuratively) of Fernando Previtali who conducts the performance with vigor and passion. His singers, while good and even excellent at times, supply some of the faults. They seem to get carried away by the general excitement and become bumptious. Carlo Tagliabue as Count di Luna is fine. He vows *mille atroci spasimi* on Manrico, Leonora and all who cross his path in true operatic fashion and is, in fact, a sort of Iago in excelsis. Caterina Mancini sings an opulent voiced Leonora although inclined to an occasional shrill top note. Giacomo Lauri-Volpi, ex-Metropolitan tenor, still has his ringing high notes. He shows a regrettable tendency, however, to pull the music about by hanging on to every note that shows off his voice while running over the rest rather perfunctorily. Miriam Pirazzini is a capital, if youthful, Azucena. The other singers are uniformly excellent and the chorus and orchestra join in the spirit of the affair in commendable fashion.

This is not the last word in *Il Trovatore*, rather it is the first. One hopes that sometime a more even performance can be recorded; but in the meantime the present set will do very well indeed. W.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg (complete). (Sung in German). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Ira Malaniuk (sopranos); Gerhard Unger (tenor); Otto Edelmann, Erich Kunz, Friedrich Dalberg (bassos); with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Bayreuth Festival conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 5-12" discs in album (*C-SL-117). \$27.83.

The second complete recording of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, this one a Bayreuth Festival performance is, in many respects, a vast improvement over the earlier Urania effort. Readers of these columns will recall the Urania records suffered from an almost impossible Walther and a somewhat ordinary Eva and Magdalena. On the other hand, the Urania set had a superb Sachs and Pogner. And it becomes apparent that Kempe's direction was more distinguished than Von Karajan's. The defects of the present set, however, are not nearly so serious as those in the Urania set and as a performance and as a recording it must be accounted the better. Not least among the advantages of the present set is its inclusion on five records, making a notable saving in price: \$27.83 as against \$37.50.

Otto Edelmann as Hans Sachs, sings well and takes great pains to be convincing. He does not have

great vocal resources but he uses his relatively limited gifts with intelligence. The same criticism holds true concerning Frederick Dahlberg, the Pogner of the performance. Erich Kurz is a first rate Beckmesser. This excellent artist invariably turns in a good performance—at times, an inspired one. Inspiration is not lacking in his portrayal of the least likable of the master singers.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf is an almost ideal Eva. Her conception of the character is that of a young innocent girl, and throughout the long role she never fails to hold one's interest both dramatically and musically. Hans Hopf as Walther Von Stolzing is more than acceptable. The role is difficult and Herr Hopf is almost always equal to the occasion. The *Preislied* is very poetically sung with warm middle tones and fine ringing top notes.

The ensemble, the choral passages, and the great quintet are beautifully handled. Von Karajan conducts with his usual detachment but when he drops this manner and really concerns himself with the music, the results are very beautiful—it is a pity that he is not a more consistent conductor.

Columbia's recording is uniformly good and a fine libretto has been included. W.

Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro, K. 492 (complete). (Sung in Italian). Aulikki Rautawaara, Audrey Mildmay, Luise Helletsgruber (sopranos); Heddle Nash (tenor); Roy Henderson, Willi Domgraf-Fassbaender (baritones); with supporting soloists and the Chorus and Orchestra of the Glyndebourne Mozart Opera Festivals conducted by Fritz Busch. 13-7" discs in box (ØV-WCT-54) \$16.04. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6001) \$11.44.

The third "complete" *Nozze di Figaro* is now available on LP records. This is, of course, the memorable Glyndebourne production of 1935 and has long been a cherished item in many collections.

The performance is well nigh perfect. The late Fritz Busch directs the music with loving care and the soloists are all good, in some instances exceptional. Willi Domgraf-Fassbaender is probably the finest Figaro on records. As is no longer customary in this country, Figaro here is sung by a baritone, a fact that makes an astonishing difference in the "sound" of the role. Roy Henderson (also most properly a baritone) is a superb Count Almaviva. Heddle Nash is an incomparable Basilio. The ladies are also good, if not as fine (from a vocal standpoint) as those in the Columbia and Cetra sets. Aulikki Rautawaara is a youthful Contessa, vocally capable and singing with a warmth and sincerity that more than makes up for a certain lack of experience. Audrey Mildmay is a coquettish Susanna, if not always a Mozartean one. Luise Helletsgruber is an ideal Cherubino. A curious coincidence finds a very youthful Italo Tajo singing Dr. Bartolo (in part of the set only; Norman Allin sings the role in the ensembles) while in the Cetra set, of course, he sings the title role.

This performance is far superior to the Columbia version (TNR Dec. '51). The chief competition comes from the Cetra set (TNR Oct. '51) where excellent recording and better women's voices may, perhaps, swing the scale in its favor. Domgraf-Fassbaender is infinitely superior to Tajo, however, and Bruscantini is no match for Henderson artistically. There is little to choose from between Busch and Previtali—both are inspired musicians. Monetarily, the Victor set is \$6.41 cheaper than Cetra's recording—a sizeable amount—it depends on how much one values the better recording and additional recitatives.

The transfer to LP in this instance has not been so deftly accomplished as in the case of *Don Giovanni*. Modern phonographs, capable of adjusting treble and bass, can make it sound very well, however. W.

Tchaikovsky: Pique Dame, Op. 68 ("Queen of Spades") (abridged version). (Sung in German). Elisabeth Grümmer (soprano); Margarete Klose (contralto); Rudolf Schock (tenor); Hans Heinz Nissen (baritone); with supporting soloists, Chorus of the Civic Opera (Berlin), and the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-207) \$11.90.

Tchaikovsky undertook the composition of *Pique Dame* with considerable misgiving. "The subject . . . doesn't move me in the least," and again "It is quite possible that *Pique Dame* is a very bad opera . . . it is quite probable that I shall hate it . . ." Finally, however, he concluded that " . . . I believe it to be my greatest composition."

The reception of the opera has been as mixed as the composer's feelings. It had its world *première* on 19 December 1890 and was a great success. It reached the Metropolitan during the season of 1909/10 but even Gustav Mahler's inspired direction and a distinguished cast featuring Leo Slezak, Emmy Destinn, Alma Gluck and Adamo Didur could not achieve more than four performances that season and there have been none since.

Urania's recording, in abridged form, is only fairly well presented. The biggest disappointment is Rudolf Schock, the Herman of the performance. His voice seems to have deteriorated since he made his HMV discs several years ago. An annoying vibrato mars his upper register and there is an unbecoming throaty quality in his once clear tenor. Margarete Klose is a demoniac old Countess, the dark tone of her warm, vibrant contralto is employed very effectively. Elisabeth Grunner, a young lyric soprano, makes a convincing Lisa. Her voice is ample in range but has a tendency to thin out in the upper portion. Hans Nissen is an accomplished Prince Yeletsky.

The Civic Opera Chorus and the Radio Berlin Orchestra are directed in sterling fashion by Arthur

Rother. Urania's recording is good and, while a libretto has been furnished, it is virtually useless in following the performance for it contains only the English words. W.

A. Scarlatti: Il Trionfo dell' Onore ("Honor's Triumph") (complete). (Sung in Italian). Rossana Zerbini (soprano); Amalia Pini, Ornella Rovero (mezzo-sopranos); Amadeo Berdini (tenor); Mario Borriello (basso); with supporting soloists and the EIAR Orchestra conducted by Carlo Maria Ciulini. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1223) \$11.90.

One of the earliest *opere buffa* is Alessandro Scarlatti's *Il Trionfo del Onore* ("Honor's Triumph") which antedates Pergolesi's classic *La Serva Padrona* by some fifteen years. Unlike the *vaudeville* and *ballad* operas that were based essentially on traditional music, the *opera buffa* belongs to art music. As Manfred Bukofzer points out, in his admirable *Music in the Baroque Era*, it consists of arias and recitatives composed in a deliberately popular tone that matches perfectly the stereotyped character of the *comedia dell'arte* which populated its libretti. *Il Trionfo dell' Onore* had long disappeared from the repertoire when a contemporary Italian composer and conductor Virgilio Mortari, brought out a new edition of the score in 1940. It is the Mortari edition that was used for this recording.

The work sounds somewhat archaic to ears accustomed to nineteenth and twentieth century operas, but it does possess a nostalgic charm that is very persuasive. The singers are, unfortunately, not first class. Amadeo Berdini, the leading tenor is adequate, but no more. Sante Messina is a *buffa* tenor, that is to say he sings in a thin nasal voice which befits the role of a lecherous old man, but which can hardly be considered beautiful. Amelia Pini is very successful as Leonora, the betrayed heroine. She uses her rich mezzo-soprano with intelligence and discretion, making a fine effect. The other assorted sopranos and mezzos are inclined to shrillness.

The performance, as directed by Carlo Giulini is, one feels, a little on the staid side. There could be more sparkle, more animal spirit than meets the ear. The music is, however, more for specialists than for the general public. Cetra has supplied fair recording and a superb libretto. W.

Bizet: Carmen (complete). (Sung in French). Janine Micheau (soprano); Suzanne Juyol (mezzo-soprano); Libero de Luca (tenor); Julien Giovannetti (baritone); supporting soloists with L'Opéra-Comique et Choeurs de l'Opéra-Comique (Paris) conducted by Albert Wolff. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLPA-6) \$17.85.

The third in the current series of *Carmen* recordings is presented by London with an excellent cast of singers from the world famous L'Opéra-Comique under the direction of the veteran conductor, Albert Wolff.

The performance is a good one, if not outstanding.

Suzanne Juyal is a light voiced Carmen, who sings a somewhat over-refined cigarette girl. Vocally, she performs well, bringing a degree of expression to the role; but there is none of the "tigerish" quality one usually associates with the part. Done José is allotted to Libero de Luca, a tenor of modest resources. The role, musically, is a bit too big for him; much of the music lies too high for him to do it justice, with the result that he must push and work for his top notes with a resultant sacrifice of quality. He is expressive in the calmer moments and achieves a fair amount of conviction. Julian Giovanetti is a swashbuckling Escamillio and sings the prescribed music in robust style. The other members of the cast, especially Janine Micheau as Micaëla, turn in first-rate performances.

Albert Wolff paces the production well but does not produce the drive and fine high excitement that marked Fritz Reiner's direction. It is superior to Cluyten's effort for Columbia, however. The orchestra and chorus perform expertly and the recording is superb. There is fine realism and presence in the reproduction, almost equal to the spectacular Victor job.

A comparison of the three extant LP *Carmens* is difficult. Each has outstanding features, each has serious faults. The most authentic is the Columbia recording with its spoken dialogue. The most exciting is the RCA-Victor, while the present set falls somewhere between both as regards authenticity and excitement. Since London frugally omits supplying a libretto, and since the present reviewer feels that *Carmen* should excite, he feels the RCA-Victor set will wear better from all angles and thus is the best choice. W.

Wolf: Der Corregidor (complete). (Sung in German). Marta Fuchs, Margarete Teschemacher (sopranos); Karl Erb (tenor); Kurt Böhme, Gottlob Frick (bassos); with supporting soloists, Dresden State Opera Chorus and the Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Karl Elmendorff. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-208) \$17.85.

Of the many composers who wrote operas in Wagner's shadow, only Cornelius, Goetz, and Hugo Wolf could be said to have had artistic success, although not even these composers had any degree of popular acclaim. Verdi, of course, and consequently most of the younger Italian writers) did not come under Wagner's domination at any time in his career.

Der Corregidor is based on a novel by Pedro de Alarcon, the same novel that later formed the basis of de Falla's *Sombrero de Tres Picos*. The first performance anywhere, of this, Wolf's only work for the stage, took place in Mannheim on 7 July 1896. It was enthusiastically received and has remained popular in Central Europe. It has never been presented by the Metropolitan, and is not mentioned in the majority of books on the opera. This is all the more

remarkable when one considers the tremendous popularity of Wolf's *lieder* and the uniform excellence of the score.

A cast of impressive proportions has been assembled by Urania; virtually a roll call of the best German artists—Erb, Teschemacher, Fuchs, Frick, Böhme, Hann and Hermann. The title role is in the capable hands of Karl Erb, long considered one of the foremost exponents of Wolf songs. His voice still retains a good share of its former charm and he is very convincing. Margarete Teschemacher amazes as Frasquita. Her dramatic soprano is fresh and clear and she sings the music of Lukas' wife in impeccable fashion. Josef Hermann is a very capable Tio Lukas, while Böhme, Frick and Fuchs contribute impressive performances as the Alkalde, Tonuelo and Donna Mercedes respectively. Special mention must be made of Georg Hann's fine characterization as the woman-hating Rapela.

Karl Elmendorff directs the performance, and the Dresden State Opera Chorus with the Saxon State Orchestra sing and play with taste and enthusiasm. Urania's recording is uniformly good and the entire project comes off to the credit of all concerned. W.



VOCAL

Rachmaninoff: (13) Songs. (Sung in Russian). Maria Kurenko (soprano); Vadim Gontzoff (baritone) accompanied by Laurence Rosenthal (piano). 1-12" disc (*RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS-5) \$5.95.

This is the second LP disc devoted to the songs of Sergei Rachmaninoff to be issued by the Rachmaninoff Society. As in the case of the previous issue, they are sung, in the original language, by Maria Kurenko.

The present disc embraces the thirteen songs selected from three opus numbers 21, 26 and 34. Chronologically, the three groups date from 1902, 1906 and 1912. The selection has been made with care and presents a contrasting emotional content. Texts by such varied poets as Chekov, Pushkin and de Musset, as well as such relatively unfamiliar writers as Polonsky, Balmont, and Bunin are represented.

Among the most interesting are such unique and striking songs as *Two Partings* which is a dialogue for soprano and baritone. In this song Mme. Kurenko is assisted by her gifted son Vachim Gontzoff. Also in the category of the unusual are *We Will Rest* and the ecstatic *What Happiness*. More conventional, but equally beautiful are *The Ring*; *The Fountain*; and *Yesterday We Met*.

All the changing moods and colors of these songs are conveyed with the utmost clarity and artistry by Mme. Kurenko. She is temperamentally suited to project the pensive melancholy that pervades the majority of the songs. The total effect, then, is that of a genuine artist completely at home with her

material. Needless to say, it is a gratifying musical experience.

Sensitive and refined accompaniments are supplied by the youthful Laurence Rosenthal. He has the advantage, also, of some of the finest piano recording this reviewer has ever heard on records. English translations (or prose realizations as the notes accurately identify them) of all the songs have been supplied and, as pointed out above, the recording has been accomplished in sterling fashion. W.

Songs of the Auvergne—arr. Canteloube. Madeleine Grey (soprano) with orchestra conducted by M. Elie Cohen. One side, and **Song at School**—arr. Weill-Emanuel. Madeleine Grey (soprano) with flute and piano accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4459). \$5.45.

We feel confident that by merely announcing the fact that Madeleine Grey's unforgettable rendition of *Songs of the Auvergne* is now available on long-playing discs we will lighten the hearts of many who have their 78 rpm versions stored away as cherished but breakable treasures. For those who have never heard these beautifully arranged and poignantly sung melodies of one of France's oldest provinces, we have only the hope that they will arrange to do so in the near future. Miss Grey's charming offering on the reverse side of six folk songs designed for use in the schools is no match for the *Auvergne* group since the latter is unique. However, it is the best coupling under the circumstances since it shows that an artist of Miss Grey's stature can turn her hand to almost anything and do it well.

Old American Songs (arr. Copland). William Warfield (baritone) accompanied by Aaron Copland (piano). One side, and (5) **Sea Chanties** (arr. Dougherty). William Warfield (baritone) accompanied by Otto Herz (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2206) \$4.

William Warfield is one of the more recent arrivals in the field of American concert singers. His story is similar to that of other native artists—first winning an important vocal contest and then study at a conservatory (in this case the Eastman School of Music). Warfield's career was interrupted by the war, but after this he appeared in musical comedy (*Call Me Mister*), and in MGM's film, *Showboat*.

The present disc reveals William Warfield as the possessor of a fine natural baritone of considerable range. It is easily produced and is remarkably even throughout the register.

The choice of material, however, will be apt to limit the sale of the record for it is doubtful whether the ten items of *Americana* chosen will have very wide appeal. The first side is devoted to five *Old American Songs* as arranged by Aaron Copland who also serves as accompanist. Musically, such songs as *The Boatman's Dance* (1843); *The Dodger* (a political song of the 1880's) and *I Bought Me A Cat* (a children's song more than slightly reminiscent of

Old McDonald Had A Farm) are very light weight. The other two, a ballad *Long Time Ago* (1837) and *Simple Gifts* (an old Shaker song) have somewhat greater musical merit. On the other side, Mr. Warfield delivers himself of *Five Sea Chanties* arranged from traditional sources by Celius Dougherty. Again the musical value approaches the vanishing point. The familiar *Rio Grande* and *Shenandoah* are included along with *Blow Ye Winds*, *Across the Western Ocean* and *Mobile Bay*.

In all ten songs the soloist sings expertly if somewhat monotonously. The fault may be in Mr. Warfield's conception of the music, but one is inclined to lay a large share of the blame on the colorless character of the tunes.

Good recording and sparse notes have been supplied by the Columbia engineers and Morris Hastings respectively. W.

PIANO



Schumann: Die Davidsbündlertänze, Op. 6. One and one-half sides, and **Schumann: Arabesque, Op. 18.** Ray Lev (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1104) \$5.95.

Schumann: Novelette in F-sharp minor, Op. 21, No. 8 and Schumann: (2) Fantasiestücke, Op. 111, Nos. 1 and 2. One side, and **Hindemith: Sonata No. 3 for Piano.** Muriel Kerr (piano). 1-12" disc (*HYPERION-K-1/2) \$5.95.

Of particular interest is Ray Lev's magnificent recording of Schumann's *Die Davidsbündlertänze, Op. 6*. It is an important and highly worth-while addition to the present LP catalog. Miss Lev is constantly gaining in favor with discerning music lovers, and we like to think that this is in no small part due to the many splendid recordings she has made. When this fine American pianist made her first records for Concert Hall a few short years ago she was practically unknown in the hinterland of her native country; now there is call for her recordings in most of the small cities and towns scattered from coast to coast.

The second LP disc listed above gives us an opportunity to hear the playing of the brilliant young pianist, Muriel Kerr. Miss Kerr was born in Canada and came to New York at the age of eleven. She studied with Ernest Hutcheson at the Juilliard Graduate School. She made her recital debut at the age of seventeen and since then has concertized extensively in both Europe and America.

"American Music Series" (Vol. I). Jeanne Behrend (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3024) \$5.95.

Reinagle: *Sonata in E*.

Gottschalk: *March of the Gíbaros*.

Griffes: *Piano Sonata*.

Palmer: (3) *Preludes*.

The American pianist, Jeanne Behrend, has de-

voted much time in extensive research in the music of the Western Hemisphere. In 1945 she was sent by the State Department on a good-will concert tour of South America. She gives illustrated courses in American Music at the Juilliard School of Music and at the Philadelphia Conservatory. For this LP disc she has chosen examples of the work of the following four American composers: Alexander Reinagle (1756-1809); Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869); Charles Tomlinson Griffes (1884-1920); and Robert Palmer (1915-). The space available does not permit our considering each of these musicians and their works but detailed notes which are supplied with this record gives much worth-while information for music lovers who are interested. Miss Behrend, as usual, gives performances that are of the highest artistic excellence. Reproduction and record surfaces are of the best.

Schumann: Carnival, Op. 9. Gyorgy Sandor (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4452). \$5.45.

There is now at least a half-dozen renditions of this great Schumann opus available on LP discs. We rather feel that if you compare the present version by Sandor with the Novaes recording for Vox and make your choice you will have the best that is to be had.

Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5. Artur Schnabel (piano). 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1581). \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1189). \$5.72.

We doubt whether you will ever hear a better rendition of this early Brahms work than Schnabel provides on the present LP disc. You may safely select this one for your library without hearing it first.

ORGAN



Music of Jubilee by J. S. Bach. E. Power Biggs (organ) with the Columbia Chamber Orchestra conducted by Richard Burgin. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4435). \$5.45.

Biggs' series of organ records for Columbia continues with another bulls-eye. From the standpoint of interest this disc is one of the best organ records in a long time. It will prove interesting not only to the avid collector of good organ records, but also to many who usually pass up most organ records. Seven of the selections have other instruments, or chamber orchestra, in addition to the organ; five numbers are organ solos. The solos are: *In Dulci Jubilo*; *Rejoice, Beloved Christians*; *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*; *In Dulci Jubilo* (Fantasia); and *Now thank we all our God*. The concerted numbers are: *Sinfonia to Cantata No. 29*; *Concerto and Chorale "Alleluia" from Christmas Cantata No. 142*; a chorale from the Christmas Oratorio; *My Spirit be Joyful from the Easter Cantata No. 146*; *Sheep May Safely Graze from the Birthday Cantata No. 208*;

Sonata to Cantata No. 182 for Palm Sunday; and the chorale *Awake thou wintry earth* (Cantata for Trinity Sunday).

Every number is packed with understandable, interesting music representative of Bach's best. As the title of the disc suggests it is music of a joyful nature; some of it is quiet joy, some is full and fast moving; all of it will gladden your heart. In the chorale-prelude *In Dulci Jubilo*, the Cymbelstern is heard. This organ stop consists of four small bells, struck at irregular intervals by revolving arms often set on a frame in the form of a star—hence the name, literally "Bell-star." Bach had such a stop in Arnstadt and elsewhere, and he would use it on festival occasions. It is most effective in this record. The music was recorded on the new organ in Symphony Hall, Boston, a superb instrument, magnificently reproduced by Columbia. This disc gets our very highest recommendation in every respect. S.

VIOLIN



Egk: Geigenmusik (Divertimento for Violin and Orchestra). Elisabeth Bischoff (violin) with the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Werner Egk. One side, and **Egk: French Suite.** Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra conducted by Werner Egk. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7022) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.



DICTION

Coward: Conversation Piece (A Musical Play in Three Acts). Lily Pons, Noel Coward, Ethel Griffies, Norah Howard, and Richard Burton; with supporting cast; chorus and orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-163). \$12.11.

Noel Coward's period vignette "Conversation Piece" was originally created for the delightful singing star Yvonne Printemps, who co-starred with him in its first presentation in London in 1934. She later brought the production to America with Pierre Fresnay, of French movie and theatre fame, playing opposite her. A few of the musical numbers—I'll Follow My Secret Heart and Nevermore, for instance—have since become part of the semi-classic musical literature. As a piece of antique gaiety and witty nonsense about the Regency crowd at the then fashionable Brighton, it has a charm for which we must thank Mr. Coward. No one else could make so much of so little.

This present recording, revised and adapted for the occasion by its author, boasts Miss Pons and Mr. Coward in the leading roles. The fair Lily does quite well with her acting stint and, although she wavers a little getting under way with the first few stanzas assigned to her vocally, she manages to acquit her-

self nobly before the end of the drollery. Noel Coward, however, is the main attraction. Whether assuming a French accent for his role as the Duc de Chaucigny-Varennnes, or reciting his lines of narrative to set the scenes, or singing in his "occasional" baritone, he is virtually the whole show.

For those who follow the career of one of the foremost theatrical personalities of our day, here is an opportunity to observe that "age cannot wither, nor custom stale" Mr. Coward's "infinite variety."

Readings from the Bible. Fulton Oursler (reader) with Robert Baker (organ). 1-10" disc in box (which also includes a copy of the book "The Greatest Story Ever Told" by Fulton Oursler). \$4.95. Available in the King James Version (*C-BR-1) and the Douay Version (*C-BR-2).

Readings from the Bible. Ronald Colman (reader). 3-7" discs in box (8V-WDM-1573). \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-124) \$4.67.

Readings from the Bible. Charles Laughton (reader). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8031) \$4.85.

Here we have three famous personalities reading from the Bible. First, Fulton Oursler, whose book "The Greatest Story Ever Told" is a best seller with over 800,000 copies in print; and then two universally known actors, Ronald Colman and Charles Laughton.

Mr. Oursler offers two recordings, one taken from the King James Version (*C-BR-1) and the other from the Douay Version (*C-BR-2). With each record a copy of Mr. Oursler's famous book is supplied at the price of \$4.95 for both record and book. In ordering, the version of the text desired should be specified.

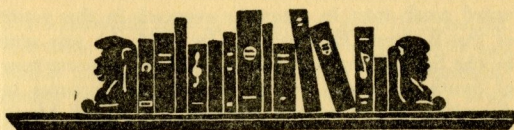
Mr. Oursler and Ronald Colman read from both the Old and New Testaments while Charles Laughton confines his reading to the Old Testament. We are very happy to say that there is no duplication, so that anyone who is intensely interested may select all three recordings.

MISCELLANEOUS



How to Teach Your Parakeet to Talk. 1-10" unbreakable 78 rpm disc. \$1.95.

If you have a parakeet and you wish to teach him to talk, here is a little record that will be a great help. The first side of this disc gives detailed instructions and the second side contains a conversation between an owner and his six year old parakeet, who has a vocabulary of several hundred words. This remarkable bird whose name is Peter Topin and lives in Chicago has been featured on television, and he was taught by the method outlined on the present record.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, FEST—Festival, HS—Hodyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PLM—Polymusic, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 ◊ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 19, NO. 12

FEBRUARY, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

WITH this issue the nineteenth volume of THE NEW RECORDS is completed. By running 16-page numbers we have been able to keep reasonably up-to-date with the new releases. We have not been able to give the space that we would like to to all of the important new recordings, but as 16 pages is the greatest number we can run, we have done the best that we could with the space available. A year ago we thought that the number of new releases would gradually become smaller; that we would be able to print more detailed reviews of items which we had been dismissing with a few lines; and that we would be able to review the more important books on musical subjects. Such, however, has not been the case. The universal popularity of LP records has been so great that more and more publishers have been coming into the field, and the number of new releases each month has increased rather than lessened. For the present it would seem that we will have to continue as we have for the last year or two and we ask our readers to be patient with us if we sometimes do not give the space to certain items to which they think these items are entitled. We ask the record publishers to please have the same patience.

A renewal blank is enclosed with this issue if your subscription has *expired*, and so if you receive one please return it promptly so that you will not miss any issues. No more copies will be mailed to those subscribers to whom renewal blanks are being sent this month. If you do not receive a renewal blank, your subscription will be continued for another full year although it may have only a few more months to run. It has been our custom to send renewal blanks to all subscribers with our February issue (the last number in the volume) but because of a special offer we made when our subscription price was raised to one dollar, a little over a

year ago, there are a great many subscribers whose subscriptions still have a year or more to run, and we thought that it would be very confusing to send them renewal blanks at this time. This year only those whose subscriptions have *expired* are receiving blanks with this (February) issue—next year everyone will receive one in February as has been our custom.

* * *

Just a year ago, RCA Victor, to mark its fifty years in the business of manufacturing phonograph records, issued a series of recordings under the general title of "Treasury of Immortal Performances." It was an immediate success and thousands of these records containing recordings of great artists who are no longer appearing before the public were sold. This month RCA Victor is making available a second series of such records. In view of the widespread approval of the first series, we feel that it is necessary only to state that the transfer of the old recordings to the new speed discs has been most successfully accomplished and to give a detailed list of the contents of each of the new discs.

A Treasury of Immortal Performances (Second series)

Rosa Ponselle in Opera and Song. Contents: *Tu che invoco* and *O Nume Tutelar* (La Vestale); *Salce! Salce!* and *Ave Maria* (Otello); Schubert's *Ave Maria*; Bishop's *Home, Sweet, Home*. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-55) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LCT-10) \$4.67.

Caruso in Opera and Song. Contents: *Di' tu se fedele* (Un Ballo in Maschera); *E lucevan le stelle* (Tosca); Donaudy's *Vaghissima sembianza*; *Ah, sì, ben mio* and *Di quella pira* (Il Trovatore); *O Souverain, O Juge, O Père* (Le Cid); Tosti's *'A Vucchella*; *Testa adorata* (La Bohème by Leoncavallo); *Alvarez' A Granada*; *Domine deus* (Messa Solennelle by Rossini). 5-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-35) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1034) \$5.72.

Aida of Yesterday. Contents: *Celeste Aida*—Gigli; *Ritorna vincitor*—Rethberg; *Temple scene*—Martinelli-Pinza; *O patria mia*—Ponselle; *Su, dunque!*—Gadsky-Amato; *Pur ti riveggo*—Ponselle-Martinelli; *Gia i sacerdoti adunansi* and *Aida, a me togliesi*—Homer-Carusio. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-51) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1035) \$5.72.

John McCormack in Opera and Song. Contents: *Fra poco a me ricovero* (Lucia di Lammermoor); *O König, das kann ich dir nicht sagen* (Tristan und Isolde); Wagner's *Träume*; O'Brien's *The Fairy Tree*; Jocelyn's *Berceuse*; *Una furtiva lagrima* (L'Elisir d'Amore); Marshall's *I Hear You Calling Me*; *Adeste fideles*. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-53) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1036) \$5.72.

Famous Duets. Contents: *Libiamo ne' lieti calici* (La Traviata)—Caruso-Gluck; *O quant' occhi fisi* (Madama Butterfly)—Caruso-Farrar; *Tu che a Dio spiegasti* and *Giusto cielo!* (Lucia di Lammermoor)—Gigli-Pinza; *Parigi, o cara* (La Traviata)—Bori-McCormack; *Son geloso del zeffiro* (La Sonnambula)—Galli-Curci-Schipa; *Barcarolle* (Tales of Hoffmann)—Farrar-Scotti; *Ah, Matilde, io t'amo e amore* (William Tell)—Martinelli-Journet. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-57) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1037) \$5.72.

Great Pianists of the Past Play Chopin. Contents: *Nocturne in E minor*, Op. 72—Pachmann; *Prelude No. 6 in B minor*; *Prelude No. 3 in G*; *Prelude No. 7 in A*, Op. 28—Rosenthal; *Mazurka in C-sharp minor*, Op. 63, No. 3—Paderewski; *Scherzo No. 3 in C-sharp minor*, Op. 39—Levitzy; *Berceuse in D-flat*, Op. 57—Cortot; *Waltz in C-sharp*, Op. 64, No. 2—Rachmaninoff; *Polonaise No. 6 in A-flat*, Op. 53—Lhevinne. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-60) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1038) \$5.72.

Stars of the Golden Age. Contents: *Sempre libera* (La Traviata)—Galli-Curci; *Chanson Indoue* (Sadko)—Galli-Curci; *Parli siamo* (Rigoletto)—Ruffo; *L'Onore! Ladri!* (Falstaff)—Scotti; *Un bel di, vedremo* (Madama Butterfly)—Bori; *Lo vedremo, o veglio audace* (Ernani)—Battistini-Sillich; *Suicidio!* (La Gioconda)—Destinn; *Addio alla madre* (Cavalleria Rusticana)—Caruso; *M'appari* (Martha)—Caruso; *Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix* (Samson et Dalila)—Homer; *Voi che sapete* (Le Nozze di Figaro)—Melba; *Pastoral* (Rosalinda)—Tetrazzini. 6-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-62) \$7.44. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1039) \$5.72.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last nineteen years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of

all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33⅓ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Stravinsky: Petrouchka. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4438) \$5.45.

Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1548) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1149) \$5.72.

Stravinsky: Petrouchka. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1568) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1175) \$5.72.

The number of really excellent recordings of Stravinsky's greater works is growing to the point where a choice is difficult. Stravinsky and Ansermet have recorded "the big three": *Firebird*, *Petrouchka*, and *Rite of Spring*; Stokowski has made the first two, Monteux the last one, plus the Mitropoulos version of *Petrouchka*. The easiest one to weed out is Mitropoulos, whose *Petrouchka* is little more than a collection of sound effects and erratic patches of music. The recording is good technically, but when played beside any of the others there is just not enough music in this performance to make it interesting. By comparison, Stokowski's estimation of the score is a revelation of the contents, and while Ansermet and the composer himself give a penetrating account of the music, Stokowski, his orchestra, and his collaborating sound engineers offer a disc so brilliant in every respect that we think it is about the most desirable *Petrouchka* ever recorded.

Monteux has been one of the most respected conductors of *Sacre* ever since he led its premiere, and today his reading of the score is notable for its clarity as well as for the freshness with which he still approaches the music. In this recording he has the Boston Symphony Orchestra, rather than his own San Francisco; and all to the good of the final result, for the Boston plays magnificently with an alertness that they sometimes lack; this is no routine performance for them. The orchestral virtuosity, coupled with the conductorial authority and the revealing reproduction make this disc outstanding. We find it hard to claim too much superiority over the Ansermet reading, but the orchestral playing and certain aspects of the reproduction are preferable in the new Monteux disc.

Each of Stravinsky's three greatest works has three recordings so high in excellence that it is unique in

the LP catalog. Possibly no other composer is honored with such distinguished performances—not even Beethoven, for there are not three Beethoven symphonies each having three recordings of such perfection as the three Stravinsky works! S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 73. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-28) \$5.95.

To describe fairly and impartially this performance is nearly impossible for your reviewer because the Beecham recording (Col. MM-265) has for many years been his criterion. It seems unfair that every other performance or recording should be measured with this one yardstick, but the impression of Sir Thomas' reading has been etched so deeply that it just cannot be erased. We still stick to that version as being as close to perfection as the music can be played. Being admittedly a great admirer of Furtwängler increases our uneasiness in this task.

The orchestral playing is beautiful; the phrasing is, as always with Furtwängler, admirable. The orchestra plays with delicacy and great refinement; there is much attention to detail. The second and third movements are, we think, very nicely performed. Furtwängler's tempo changes here and there in the first movement and particularly in the finale annoy us and switch our thoughts to Beecham. We're sure that those unfamiliar, or at least those not in love with Beecham's recording will not notice this. They will be carried away by the lovely tonal quality, and the verve and motion which Furtwängler imparts to this lovely music—the Second is so light and pastoralish, gay and graceful. The third movement is a gem. Furtwängler is aware of all this; he lightens it a great deal, takes away much of the dark weight we find in Brahms performances. It is a fine-grained reading that will acquire many friends. Reproduction is, of course, splendid; done in Kingsway Hall. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-253) \$4.95.

Schubert: Rosamunde, Op. 26 (excerpts). Royal Opera House Orchestra (Covent Garden) conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-96) \$3.

The Schubert *Symphony No. 5* is performed with marvelous drive and precision by the renowned Amsterdam orchestra under its distinguished conductor. The recording in our collection is the older Telefunken by the Berlin Philharmonic under Hans von Benda. We thought the beginning tempo of von Beinum somewhat faster but a comparison showed it to be about the same. The difference is in the rounder, gentler, and more relaxed manner of von Benda. The opening movement is similar in ways and yet different, a subtle example of the

difference in conducting. The overall excellence of the new London disc is to be admired however, and we would be glad to call this the top version if London had not broken the second movement by placing half on each side of the disc. On LP discs, a work of the length of the Schubert *Fifth* should not have any movements broken in half. London has been guilty of this before.

M-G-M has been producing some classical LP discs of note, and the present one of Rosamunde excerpts is one of its best. Braithwaite and the Covent Garden orchestra play with great care—we would even say it is meticulous playing. It is noticeably slow compared to the way this music is often glossed over, but it is very rhythmic and not at all fussy. The music holds together well, which makes this a performance of sweet Viennese flavor. The overture used in this recording is the one most of us love best, the one usually played, the one written for the opera *Die Zauberharfe*, and not the *Alfonso und Estrella* overture used by Heger on the Mercury LP disc. There follows the three other familiar excerpts: Ballet No. 1, Entr'acte No. 2, and Ballet No. 2, all played with fine style and becoming warmth and grace. The reproduction is good, a shade thin in quality but very acceptable. S.

R. Strauss: Symphonica Domestica, Op. 53. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Richard Strauss. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7220) \$5.95.

R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28. RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1580) \$2.83. Coupled with **R. Strauss: Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1180) \$5.72.

R. Strauss: Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24. RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1579) \$3.99. Coupled with **R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1180) \$5.72.

The *Symphonica Domestica* is a recorded concert performance, 1944, and is highly satisfactory from a standpoint of reproduction, lack of extraneous noises, and other failings of concert recordings. Strauss conducts with an inspired virtuosity that even the Vienna Philharmonic can just about encompass, and when it is all over you are aware that the intensity of the music-making has really been an experience. As an orchestral showpiece, the *Domestic Symphony* is acceptable as good Richard Strauss writing, but as a tone poem depicting domestic life, it is a lot of noisy nonsense that no man nor woman could endure for more than a fortnight without going mad. We prefer always to forget the program and just listen to the music which, in the case of this high-powered performance, is exciting enough. This is the only version on LP. A former recording on 78 rpm by Ormandy was a more refined

exposition of the music with sweeter power, if somewhat lacking in the drive and excitement which the composer himself injects into the present performance.

Death and Transfiguration has two other LP recordings, Mengelberg and Ormandy conducting their usual orchestras. The newest one by Reiner is one of his best efforts, resulting in a masterpiece of orchestral detail and careful conducting. It contains also a sizeable amount of power and the ephemeral qualities which go to make a performance of this work successful. Ormandy's recording of this score was made on one of those frequent days which found him in an uninspired mood. Mengelberg had his usual fine time wallowing around with the Concertgebouw Orchestra in a Strauss score which can stand all the excesses he so gorgeously bestows on it. Reiner's version is preferable as a more modern reproduction. The coupling is the same as Mengelberg's (on which Krauss does *Till*), and in this work Reiner takes over with one of his favorite virtuoso vehicles. His reading of *Till Eulenspiegel* is always a brilliant display of score and orchestral forces, firmly guided by Reiner, who has no trouble retaining his reputation as one of the greatest conductors of Strauss' music. S.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 43. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1602) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1172) \$5.72.

Wagner: Siegfried Idyll. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1571) \$2.83. Coupled with **R. Strauss: Don Juan, Op. 20.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1177) \$5.72.

R. Strauss: Don Juan, Op. 20. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1289) \$2.83 (TNR June '49). Coupled with **Wagner: Siegfried Idyll.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1177) \$5.72.

These two LP's are part of a Serge Koussevitzky Memorial Edition which RCA Victor is issuing since the death of the beloved conductor in June 1951. This pair is a wonderful choice and a fine memorial edition, for it presents three works in which the great conductor excelled. The old recording he made for Victor many years ago of the Sibelius *Second* was claimed by most record collectors to be a notably great performance. Our opinion has always been that Koussevitzky inflated the work unnecessarily, played much of it too slowly, and did not present it as well as some other conductors. We think that in this new performance of the Sibelius *Second* Koussevitzky has tightened up the work and that his ideas of the score have matured in the intervening years to a much more mellow and clearly wrought conception. We prefer this new recording to the Tor Mann-Stockholm version on Capitol, but find it hard to resist the glittering appeal of the Ormandy-Philadelphia Orchestra version—for sheer brilliance of or-

chestral playing they are tops in this work.

Koussevitzky was never considered much of a Wagnerian conductor, and did not program him frequently. Of the Wagner we have heard him do, this *Siegfried Idyll* is about the finest interpretation. It is played here with especially beautiful orchestral tone, revealing this phase of the Boston Symphony's art which was brought to such a high state of perfection by its conductor. Two other LP recordings of the *Siegfried Idyll* exist, each of which is good and offers a choice of other couplings. If you prefer the present *Don Juan* coupling, you will get a brilliant and dashing reading of the familiar tone poem, about the equal of the best of the other six recorded versions. We say *about* the equal, for the recent Toscanini recording is a masterpiece of refining this complex score, while Krauss and the others each have individual merits in their recordings. The reproduction of all three works in this Koussevitzky release is up to the characteristically high and brilliant standard of Boston recording. S.

Franck: Le Chasseur Maudit ("The Accursed Huntsman"). One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Le Coq d'Or**—Suite. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4454) \$5.45.

Sir Thomas is back again with another of his specialties in magic—taking some rather light and familiar music and giving it a new lease on life. He has worked the usual wonders with these two pieces by playing them with great care, exceptional insight and a lack of the common pitfalls and foolishness. Beecham never overplays these things nor changes their essential shape and qualities, and you are therefore never aware of anything radically different or spectacular going on, but you are fully aware of a superior rendition of music which may have been jaded but is now fresh and beautiful. What more can be said of these great readings? The reproduction is excellent on both sides.

The second of Franck's symphonic poems, *Le Chasseur Maudit*, was composed in 1882, six years before the *D minor Symphony*. The music, which is eminently pictorial and easy to follow, was based on a ballad by Burger. This ballad tells the story of a huntsman who refuses to pay attention to a bell summoning him to St. Hubert's Mass. He rides through the crowd of worshippers, and for this impious act he is condemned to hunt throughout all eternity. We will but add that the fabled huntsman never before had a ride as depicted by Sir Thomas, and you will find the music more interesting than you imagined.

Le Coq d'Or, first an opera, then an opera-pantomime, now usually a ballet, is represented here by the concert suite of four sections: King Dodon in his Palace, King Dodon on the Battlefield, King Dodon and the Queen of Shemakha, and the March. The first section is formed of excerpts from the first scene, including the Golden Cockerel theme and the

expansive and lovely lullaby. The second section is in effect a mood picture of the desolate terrain on which the battle has taken place. The third section is a summary of the scene in which the king and queen do their dance, while the suite concludes with the march that accompanies the return of Dodon to his capital with his bride. The brilliance and the pageantry evoked by Sir Thomas is again a beautiful tapestry of the finest colors. S.

Bartók: Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta.

Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4456) \$5.45.

If this is not a recording of a concert performance, then someone wants to have a few words with the members of the Philharmonia Orchestra or whoever it is that makes the extraneous noises heard in this recording. They are particularly noticeable near the end of the first movement, in soft passages, naturally. The quality of the reproduction is good, somewhat rounder and more resonant than the Capitol recording of this music by the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony under Harold Byrns. Von Karajan's performance is also rounder and more resonant and not as biting and elemental as our West Coast group. If you want your Bartók incisive and modern as possible, you will prefer Capitol's disc; if you wish it sugar-coated, then the smoother treatment of Von Karajan will appeal to you. There is yet another version, by Kubelik and the Chicago Orchestra, which we have not yet heard.

In this remarkable composition, Bartók divides his string players into two groups, one to the left and the other to the right of the conductor. Between the two string sections sit the percussion players with the double-basses behind them. The first movement finds the two string sections merged; in the other three movements they are generally treated as individual and complementary units. There is no denying the power and worth of this music, the more you hear it the more convincing and logical it all seems. It is a good introduction to Bartók for those who have not taken the first step in that direction. Since his death in 1945, an ever larger audience is coming to recognize this man as one of the most original, most powerful, and most important composers of his time. Lawrence Gilman characterized him admirably as "Acrid, powerful, intransigent; the musician of darkly passionate imagination, austere, sensuous, ruthlessly logical, a cerebral rhapsodist; a tone-poet who is both an uncompromising modernist and the resurrector of an ancient past." S.

Milhaud: La Creation du Monde (1923). Columbia

Chamber Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. One side, and **Copland: El Salón México (1936).** Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2203) \$4.

Two well-known modern compositions appear for

the first time on LP discs both played under the brilliant direction of one of America's outstanding young musicians, Leonard Bernstein. It is interesting to note that Benny Goodman is the clarinetist in the small orchestra that plays the Milhaud number. This is indeed appropriate because *La Creation du Monde* is based on the American jazz idiom. If you have the urge to go modern for a little while, the present disc makes that pleasantly easy.

CONCERTO



Bartók: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (1938).

Tibor Varga (violin) with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9545) \$5.85.

In May 1951 we reviewed the London issue of this work, played by Max Rostal with the London Symphony under Sargent. At that time we gave a general outline of the work which we will not repeat so soon again. Not being too familiar with this music we cannot make a fair comparison of the two existing recorded performances (on LP), but we had a feeling that the present disc with Tibor Varga as soloist was played with more ease and native feeling, with a more secure knowledge and feeling for the music. The accompaniment mirrors this too. The Varga presentation is a more natural and convincing job in two ways: in his own playing and in his ability to put the music over. We do not ever recall hearing Varga before; judging by this disc he must be a first rank fiddler, even among all the virtuosi of our day. His playing is as smooth and even and apparently effortless as you can imagine. It is not slick, rushed, or careless, and always carries feeling and conviction. We would like to hear some more from him. Fricsay and the Berlin Philharmonic are excellent collaborators. The reproduction may not have the range of the London, but on our machine it sounded even better in timbre and balance. The violin tone is notably fine. We are getting to like the Bartók Violin Concerto, and are rather partial to this new Decca recording of it (a Deutsche Grammophon recording).

In his well written program notes, William Flanagan gives a good appraisal of Bartók, which includes the following thoughts. Along with Igor Stravinsky and Arnold Schönberg, Bartók is generally considered to be one of the three most potent forces of this century's European modernist movement. More eclectic than either, his stylistic approach falls somewhere between the radical neo-classicism of Stravinsky and the post-romantic twelve-tone extreme of Schönberg; largely chromatic in technique, it regulates an intense, hyper-romantic mode of expression within a highly disciplined classical structure. Add the music's powerfully articulate national flavor and it becomes that rare thing—the genuinely personal, completely controlled style of a master. S.

Bruch: Concerto No. 1 in G minor for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 26. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 3-7" discs in box (♭V-WDM-1547) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-122) \$4.67.

Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole, Op. 21. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 3-7" discs in box (♭V-WDM-1603) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (♭V-LM-127) \$4.67.

The Bruch *Concerto* fills a gap in Victor's catalog and brings to the LP lists what many will consider the finest performance of this work. Its only competition is the Milstein version, but we think Menuhin and Münch get together and extract as much from this score as is possible. The reproduction is more spacious and pleasing in the newer version. Bruch's concerto is one of the most popular works in the violin literature and the composer's greatest claim to enduring fame. The first outlines of the work were sketched in Cologne when he was nineteen years of age, but it was not completed until nine years later at Coblenz. It has a notably beautiful second movement, an *Adagio* of great breadth and ardor.

With Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnol*, Victor duplicates a fine recording of this work in their catalog by Menuhin, who plays the work in its entirety. Heifetz has the benefit of more up-to-date and revealing reproduction, and he plays the usual concert version which omits the third movement, an *Intermezzo*. Heifetz has more technical wizardry than Menuhin in this wild Iberian concoction, and in the calmer melodic passages, he displays a silken tone that is most beguiling. It is a model of violinistic prowess in which Heifetz generates a great deal of excitement, all of which is under firm control. We think it is about the best *Symphonie Espagnole* you will hear, and only regret he didn't throw in the third movement to make the picture complete. A fine pair of violin records of which Victor may be justly proud. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 3 in E-flat for Horn and Orchestra, K. 447. Mason Jones (horn) with the National Gallery Orchestra conducted by Richard Bales. One side, and **Mozart: Motet—Exsultate, jubilate, K. 165** (Sung in Latin) and **Mozart: Zaide, K. 344—Ruhe sanft** (Sung in German). Barbara Troxell (soprano) with the National Gallery Orchestra conducted by Richard Bales. 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-8) \$5.95.

This LP disc will serve to introduce to record collectors throughout the country two fine young artists, both of whom studied at the Curtis Institute (Philadelphia). Mason Jones studied with Anton Horner and now has taken his place at the first desk in the horn section of the Philadelphia Orchestra—a place that Mr. Horner held with great distinction for many years. Mr. Jones is unquestionably one

of the outstanding French horn players of the present generation. . . . Barbara Troxell, after completing her studies at Curtis Institute in 1942, appeared the following year with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy in Debussy's *La Demoiselle Elue*. In 1944, after making her New York debut with the Desoff Choir at Carnegie Hall, she went to Mexico City for the Mozart Opera Festival and appeared as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* and Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* under the direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. Miss Troxell joined the Metropolitan Opera in 1949.

Mr. Jones in the not too often heard Third Horn Concerto of Mozart gives a performance that calls for high praise. He is splendidly supported by the very excellent National Gallery Orchestra under the able direction of Richard Bales. Miss Troxell has chosen for her part of this disc the very lovely Mozart motet *Exsultate jubilate*, K. 165 and the delightful "Slumber aria" from the same composer's uncompleted singspiel, *Zaide*.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 1 in A minor for 'Cello and Orchestra, Op. 33. Gregor Piatigorsky (violin-cello) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 2-7" discs in box (♭V-WDM-1538) \$2.83. Coupled with **'Cello Encores**. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1187) \$5.72.

'Cello Encores. Gregor Piatigorsky (violin-cello) accompanied by Ralph Berkowitz (piano). 3-7" discs in box (♭V-WDM-1578) \$3.99. Coupled with **Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 1 in A minor for 'Cello and Orchestra, Op. 33**. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1187) \$5.72.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 1 in A minor for 'Cello and Orchestra, Op. 33. One side, and **Haydn: Concerto No. 1 in D for 'Cello and Orchestra, Op. 101.** Maurice Gendron (violin-cello) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-23) \$5.95.

Two more versions of the Saint-Saëns 'cello concerto are being issued right on the heels of the Leonard Rose recording (TNR Dec. '51). It is hard to tell who is smoother and more suave with the concerto, Rose or Piatigorsky; and both have splendid accompaniment. We leave it at a draw. Gendron proves to be a fine 'cellist, lacking just a shade of the control of the other two artists. Of the three versions of the concerto, we would say a choice is largely dependent on what you wish for a coupling. Rose's coupling is Bloch's *Schelomo*. Gendron, as listed above, plays the wonderful old Haydn concerto, which Haydn probably never wrote, but which has the most beautiful melodies and tunes that you can hum or whistle for hours after you have heard the record. This is its first LP version and it is a good one, although it does not efface memories of the old Feuermann recording.

The six pieces which occupy the second side of the Piatigorsky disc are gathered together under the

title 'Cello Encores, and comprise five of his own transcriptions: *Moment Musicales in F minor* (Schubert), *Valse Sentimentale* (Tchaikovsky), *Rondo* (from "Sonata No. 3," Weber), *Romance in E flat* (Rubinstein), *Intermezzo* (from "Goyescas," Granados). The sixth number is Saint-Saëns' marvelous 'cello solo, *The Swan*, which Piatigorsky plays superbly. All of this music is easy to listen to, mostly familiar, and comes in small doses, which should prove pleasing enough to anyone. If you have need for these short pieces in your household or music library, this is a fine serving of them; if you prefer something more substantial as a coupling to the Saint-Saëns concerto, you can choose from Haydn or Bloch. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Quartet No. 7 in F, Op. 59, No. 1 ("Rasoumovsky No. 1"). Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1205) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 8 in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2 ("Rasoumovsky No. 2"). Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1206) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 9 in C, Op. 59, No. 3 ("Rasoumovsky No. 3"). Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1207) \$5.95.

These Concert Hall recordings of the three "Rasoumovsky" quartets by the Pascal String Quartet, a group famous for its Beethoven cycles given throughout the years in both America and Europe, have been acclaimed by both critics and chamber music lovers all over this country. We have read and heard great things about these recordings for several months but for some reason review copies of these records only reached the studio a few days ago. We were of course more than anxious to hear them and we are glad to report that we were not disappointed. The renditions of these glorious quartets are certainly worthy of the praise that has been given them and we are happy to add our strong approval.

Milhaud: String Quartet (1912). One and one-half sides, and **Turina: La Oración del Torero.** WQXR Quartet: Harry Glickman and Hugo Fiorata (violins); Jack Braunstein (viola); Harvey Shapiro (violincello). 1-12" disc (*PLM-PRLP-1004) \$5.95.

Milhaud: Madrigal and Milhaud: Pastoral and Berezovsky: Suite for Wind Quintet, Op. 11. One side, and **Fine: Partita for Woodwind Quintet.** New Art Wind Quintet: Murray Panitz (flute); Melvin Kaplan (oboe); Aldo Simonelli (clarinet); Tina di Dario (bassoon); Merrill Wilson (French horn). 1-12" disc (*CLASSIC-CE-1003) \$5.95.

The two LP discs listed above contain a variety of 20th century chamber music. All of it is expertly

played and faithfully reproduced. Those interested in modern music will doubtless find these recordings well worth investigating.

Dvorák: Trio in F minor, Op. 65. Louis Kaufman (violin), Artur Balsam (piano), Marcel Cervera (violincello). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1117) \$5.95.

Dvorák: Quintet in A for Piano and Strings, Op. 81. Jan Herman (piano) with the Ondricek String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10043) \$4.85.

The first item listed above, the *Trio in F minor*, Op. 65, is of particular importance because it is the only available recording of this Dvorák work. This Trio is considered by many musicians to be one of Dvorák's most profound chamber works, and it is thought that it should rate with the great trios of the ages. Kaufman, Cervera and Balsam give a fine thoughtful performance, and Concert Hall has supplied excellent reproduction.

At least two other LP recordings are available of the *Quintet in A*, Op. 81. They are by the Chigi Quintet on London records and by Pina Pozzi (piano) and the Winterthur String Quartet on Concert Hall discs. As far as we are concerned all three of these versions are satisfactory. To select one as being better than the others would be only a personal choice.

Beethoven: Trio No. 4 in C minor, Op. 9, No. 3. One side, and **Beethoven: Trio No. 3 in D, Op. 9, No. 2.** Pasquier Trio: Jean Pasquier (violin), Pierre Pasquier (viola) and Etienne Pasquier (violincello). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3015) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Trio No. 2 in G, Op. 9, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Serenade in D, Op. 8.** Pasquier Trio. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3031) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Trio in E-flat, Op. 3. Pasquier Trio. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3023) \$5.95.

These three LP discs contain the five string trios that Beethoven wrote early in his career; all of them were composed before he turned his attention to the string quartet with his six opera that make up Opus 18. His quartets were so successful that he never returned to the trio, and that is our loss because all of his little works in that form are delightful and thoroughly interesting. The first trio was the one in E-flat and this was published in 1797; the second, known as the *Serenade in D*, Op. 8 also dates from 1797; in the following year, 1798, the last three (Opus 9) appeared.

We thoroughly enjoyed these splendid recordings by the famous Pasquier brothers, who have been playing together since 1927, when the Pasquier Trio made its debut at the Salle des Agriculteurs in Paris. Many Americans made the acquaintance of this fine organization last season when a most successful tour of the United States was accomplished.

Mozart: Trio in B-flat, K. 502. One side, and **Mozart: Trio in E, K. 542.** The Boston Trio: Ruth Posselt (violin); Samuel Mayes (violinello); Abba Bogin (piano), 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3014) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quartet No. 17 in B-flat, K. 458 ("The Hunt"). One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 19 in C, K. 465** ("Dissonant"). The Kroll Quartet. 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-86) \$5.45.

On these two LP discs we have some lovely Mozart chamber music played by two recently formed groups of players. The Boston Trio makes its public debut with the present recording—a concert tour is planned and more recordings will follow. These three fine artists have been playing together for some time, largely for their own enjoyment, and it was only within the last few months that they decided to form the Boston Trio for recording and public performances. . . . The Kroll Quartet was founded in 1945 by William Kroll, formerly first violinist of the famous Coolidge Quartet. Mr. Kroll was joined by two other of his former colleagues in the Coolidge group: the violinist, Louis Graeler, and the violoncellist, Avron Twerdowsky. The fourth member of this new organization is Nathan Gordon, violist. Mr. Gordon was formerly with the NBC String Quartet and the Mischakoff Quartet.

For some charming Mozart chamber music played by artists of rare talent and faithfully reproduced, the present discs are indicated.

CHORAL



Handel: Ode for St. Cecilia's Day. (Sung in German). Lore Hoffmann (soprano); Walter Ludwig (tenor); with the Rudolf Lamy Choir and the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7023) \$5.95.

John Dryden, the great English poet of the Restoration, wrote two "Odes" dedicated to Saint Cecilia, the patron saint of Music. The day traditionally reserved for her, November 22nd, also saw the first performance of this, Handel's setting of *The Ode for Saint Cecilia's Day*. It is the second (1739) time Handel used a Dryden poem on Saint Cecilia, the first being the larger and more pretentious *Alexander's Feast or The Power of Music* (1736).

The form of the "Ode" is similar to that of the *cantata*, solo airs alternating with choral passages. The chorus employed here is a simple one, four voiced. The music is not too demanding, not overly florid, although there are typically Handelian passages that are, as always, magnificent. The soloists engaged for this recording are good. Lore Hoffmann is a fine lyric soprano with excellent intonation, and she sings with intelligence and expression. Her performance shows an appreciation for both text and music. Listen to her singing of the aria *Doch oh, wess Stimme gleicht*, the so-called *orgel-aria*; it is

exquisitely done! Walther Ludwig is well known to collectors in this country. His voice has darkened and thickened with the passing of the years, but it is still used with good effect and an unusual degree of artistry. The chorus and orchestra are first rate. The former sings with enthusiasm and reasonable precision while the latter seconds everyone's efforts admirably. Arthur Rother turns in another well directed performance. It would seem that he is a man to watch, for his general musicianship and understanding invariably assure a distinguished performance.

Urania's recording is good, texts are provided and the enterprise merits the attention of a wide segment of the record buying public. W.

Bach: Oster-Oratorium ("Easter Oratorio")—"Kommt, eilet und lauft." (Sung in German). Soloists with Akademiechor and Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-507) \$5.95.

Bach: (6) Sacred Arias. Bach Aria Group directed by William H. Scheide, accompanied by string ensemble. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-89) \$3.

Two very fine Bach records are offered this month. The more pretentious of the two is the first recording of Bach's great *Easter Oratorio*. This work is a magnificent conception. As befits Easter music, it is happy, full of life, and, as is the case with Bach's religious works, very devout. It opens with an extended orchestral introduction, followed by a duet and chorus *Komm eilet und lauft*. Sundry recitatives and arias follow and the work closes with an impressive chorus *Preis und Dank*. The soloists Maja Weis Osborn (Mary), Hilde Rössl-Majdan (Mary Magdalene), Kurt Equiluz (Peter) and Walter Berry (John) are all well-schooled singers, extremely capable and the possessors of fine voices. The Vienna Chamber Orchestra and the Akademie Kammerchor under Dr. Prohaska play the score to the hilt, the result being impressive to a degree.

A ten-inch disc, issued by MGM, features six sacred arias by Bach. They are *Süsser Trost* (Cantata No. 151); *Menschen glaubt* (Cantata No. 7); *Nichts ist es spät und fröhle* (Cantata No. 97); *Ich esse mit Freuden* (Cantata No. 84); *Wie furchstam wanken meine Schritte* (Cantata No. 33) and *Handle nicht nach deinen Rechten* (Cantata No. 101). All are performed by the Bach Aria Group directed by William H. Scheide. The soloists, both vocal and instrumental are more than adequate, and, as is so often the case with a young group, there is an earnestness and sincerity that raises their performance well above the average—makes it in fact, superior to that of many a well-known group that might be inclined to ride along on its reputation.

The recording in the *Easter Oratorio* is good but far too loud. The resulting "noise" in the background mars what otherwise would have been a magnificent record. MGM's recording is an average

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 † indicates 45 rpm.

job—easy to listen to. The review copy had an extremely noisy surface that may have been due only to a faulty pressing.
W.

Choral Works of Perotinus. Dessoff Choirs directed by Paul Boepple. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1112). \$5.95.

Contents: *Viderunt Omnes*; *Salvatoris Hodie*; *Vetus Abit Littera*; *Nobilis Humilis*; *Alle*; *Psallite* (All sung in Latin); *Bon Vin* (Sung in French).

An extremely unusual record is issued this month by the Concert Hall Society. It contains examples of music by, or attributed to, Perotinus or Perotin, *le Grand*, a twelfth century French musician.

Very little is known about Perotinus but like so many men of the Renaissance, his genius had many facets. He is credited with, among other things, fashioning the carved stone work and stained glass in the portion of Notre Dame cathedral intended for the choir. It is also generally believed that he was one of the first composers to write in three and four parts. In fact, the *Viderunt* recorded here, is possibly four-part music by its inventor. Another fascinating work, a companion piece almost, is the *Salvatoris hodie*. Like the *Viderunt* it is a Christmas composition, but is not as complex polyphonically. Among the other oddities are a four-voiced *conductus*, *Vetus abit Littera*; *Nobilis Humilis* (a *gymel*, or plain-song melody) and two motets *Bon vin* and *Alle Psallite*.

All this is definitely esoteric music. Its chief interest lies in its antiquity and is notable for remoteness and, for twentieth century ears, its serenity. Very seldom does a wayward emotion mar the smooth surface of the thought and melody. The Dessoff Choirs, specialists in this sort of music, sing with precision and persuasive tonal beauty.

The disc is definitely one for the collector of old music. For the general music lover, however, it is suggested that the record be heard, for music of the twelfth century is apt to be an acquired taste. It would be difficult, in all events, to imagine a better introduction to this ancient music than the present sampling. Technically the recording is uniformly good.
W.

Dello Joio: A Psalm of David. (Sung in Latin). Crane Chorus and Orchestra of State University Teachers College, Potsdam, N. Y., directed by Helen M. Hosmer. 1-10" disc (*CH-CHS-1118). \$4.67.

Norman Dello Joio is one of the most prolific of our younger (b. 1913) American composers. He has written, in addition to much choral music, music in many other forms including chamber music, ballet and some extended works for symphony orchestra. His music is characteristic of his age but rather more melodic than that of many of his contemporaries. His use of dissonance, for example, is not that of the so called "wrong note school"—dissonance there is, but never for its own sake or *pour ettoner ses*

contemporarians. Rather it occurs in the line of duty; there is some logic behind it.

The *Psalm of David* is an extended work, a setting of the 51st Psalm (a fact that is kept well concealed on both the record label and in the notes) that was commissioned by the Crane Department of Music of the State University Teachers College of New York. The previously mentioned characteristics of Dello Joio's music are in evidence throughout, plus an archaic quality most suitable to this text. The composer, it may safely be said, has set out what he intended to do "to achieve classical balance and lucidity in combination with 20th century color, drama and passion."

The music is beautifully sung and played by the Crane Department of Music. The work was obviously thoroughly prepared with loving care. The resultant performance is one that, in addition to being definitive, is artistically a joy. The recording is excellent; one particularly notes the fine balance between chorus and orchestra.

Recommended for all modern music enthusiasts, it is also a must for all lovers of fine choral music.
W.

The Italian Madrigal (Ars Nova and the 16th Century). (Sung in Italian). Vassar Madrigal Singers directed by E. Harold Geer. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3029) \$5.95.

This is a most comprehensive disc, including as it does, selections from the 14th century (the dawn of the *Ars Nova* "new art") and a sampling of 16th century madrigals. There are examples by such obscure (except to musicologists) composers as Giovanni di Ciconia (14th-15th cent.). Jacopo da Balogna (14th cent.) and Francesco Landini (1305-1397) that are representative of the *Ars Nova*. For the 16th century madrigals, Dr. Geer and the Vassar Madrigal Singers, have selected works by Bonchieri (1565-1634) Orazio Vecchi (1550-1605) Festa (15th-16th cent.) and Palestrina (1526-1594).

The music is of absorbing interest. Especially fine are the scenes from the "Madrigal Comedy" *La Pazzia Senile* of Bonchieri. This is a work of the same character as Vecchi's *L'Amphiparnasso* and was, in all probability, written in imitation of that great work. It has, none the less, an undying spirit and vitality that are nothing short of amazing. The Palestrina items are, of course, excellent as is all that master's output. The *Ars Nova* music sounds a bit strange to modern ears but a few hearings should, and probably will, alleviate much of this difficulty.

The Vassar Madrigal Singers is a group of fourteen young ladies who sing with sympathy and understanding. Their performance of this unique music is at once intelligent and authentic. There is a realism and an atmosphere about this performance that is intriguing. The recording is a good without being exceptional.

This record deserves a place in any representative collection and is a must for the specialist in this field.

W.



OPERA

Wagner: Tannhäuser (complete). (Sung in German). Marianne Schech, Margarete Bäumer, Rita Streich (sopranos); August Seider, Karl Ostertag, Franz Klarwein (tenors); Karl Paul, Benno Kusche, Rudolf Wünzer (baritones); Otto von Rohr (basso); with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Munich State Opera conducted by Robert Heger. 4-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-211) \$24.50.

Urania scores this month with an exciting and eminently listenable first "complete" recording of *Tannhäuser* on LP discs. This work, the first Wagnerian opera to be more Wagner than Meyerbeer, Weber *et cie* receives first class treatment and the result is one that places it in the front rank of recorded operatic performances.

The cast, drawn from the Munich State Opera, is reasonably good. The title role has been assigned to the veteran tenor August Seider who will be remembered by many as the Max of the Deutsche Grammophon (now Decca LP) *Freischütz*. Herr Seider delivers himself, now and then, of some very sour notes, his voice occasionally being unequal to the demands placed upon it; but there is no mistaking his sincerity and musicianship, for Seider is a capable artist. Karl Paul is the Wolfram and he is an obviously younger man, for his voice is clear and strong. It is not a sensuous voice, but he injects a reasonable amount of feeling into his portrayal and it can be accounted a success. Otto von Rohr is a sonorous Landgrave Hermann, if sometimes a rather pompous one.

The ladies are well cast. Margarete Bäumer, the Venus of the production, is excellent. The music lies well for her voice and her many years of operatic experience are evident in her knowing characterization. Elisabeth is sung by a young German soprano, Marianne Schech. It is fitting that a youthful voice should sing the part and Miss Schech turns in a rousing, almost exuberant performance. Her handling of the taxing *Dich teure Halle* is a fine piece of work.

A major portion of the success of the recording is due to Robert Heger. This *Tannhäuser* will be a revelation to many people due to its complete lack of "schmaltz." Sensuous it is, but there is a drive, a complete understanding of the score by orchestra, chorus and principals that welds the music into an harmonious and convincing whole.

Urania has accomplished its finest recording to date and the package has been designed with the idea of giving the buyer both information and pleasure (i.e., there is a libretto and intelligent notes). The practice of including pictures of the principal artists is also highly commendable. It is

possible to imagine a better *Tannhäuser* from a purely vocal standpoint but it is unlikely that a better over-all performance will be recorded. W.

Verdi: Aida (complete). (Sung in Italian). Caterina Mancini (soprano); Giulietta Simionato (mezzo-soprano); Mario Filippeschi (tenor); Rolando Panerai (baritone); Antonio Massaria, Guido Neri (bassos); with the EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Vittorio Gui. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1228) \$17.85.

In almost any poll of favorite operas, Verdi's *Aida* will rank no lower than third, and is usually in the second spot. The reasons for its undying popularity are easily apparent in the new recording issued by Cetra. The work has drama, fire and wonderful melodies. Not the flowing melodies of *Rigoletto* or *La Forza del Destino* to be sure, but the carefully planned and calculated tunes of a master of both music and the theatre.

Cetra has gathered its finest forces for this recording and it stands as almost a perfect performance. The title role is sung by Caterina Mancini, a young dramatic soprano who is ideally suited to the part, both temperamentally and vocally. She invests the role of the captive princess with all the pathos, passion and dignity inherent in the character. Sgra. Mancini rises to great heights in the arias *Retorna vincitor* and the moving *O patria mia*. Her's is a stunning performance.

Giulietta Simionato is a youthful Amneris. This is refreshing, for all too often the part is assigned to a deep voiced throaty contralto who sounds old enough to be Radames' mother. Miss Simionato manages to convey a feeling of frustration that is eminently suitable and, vocally, she negotiates all the music in a manner that belies its difficulties.

Mario Filippeschi is a superb dramatic tenor, youthful but with a magnificent range. He enters into the role of Radames so thoroughly that, on one or two occasions, he is completely carried away. He has an unfortunate (but very Italian) habit of introducing a sob here and there, but in general his performance is so stirring that these lapses may be overlooked. Rolando Panerai is a dignified but fiery Amonasro, and his wholly admirable baritone is always effective. Giulio Neri as Ramfis and Antonio Massaria as the King contribute well rounded performances. The choir and orchestra of Radio Italiana under Vittorio Gui are excellent. Sgr. Gui is complete master of the situation while his tempi and phrasing are those of an intelligent and realistic musician.

By comparison, Victor's star-studded *Aida* made some five or six years ago, seems pale and mannered, although voice for voice the Victor set is superior. As is so often the case, however, the presence of so many "stars" results in a performance lacking in unity and *esprit de corps*. Cetra's recording is excellent and the set is unreservedly recommended.

W.

Puccini: La Bohème (complete). (Sung in Italian). Renata Tebaldi, Hilde Gueden (sopranos); Giacinto Prandelli (tenor); Giovanni Inghilleri (baritone); Raphael Arie (basso); with supporting soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of Santa Cecilia (Augsusto, Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LLP-462/63) \$11.90.

One of the finest recorded performances of opera makes its appearance this month. This recording of *La Bohème* is the peer of such outstanding and artistic (in the broadest sense of that much misused word) sets as Victor's *Carmen* and *Rigoletto* technically, and the musical equal or superior to such landmarks as the Victor *Faust* and Cetra's *Aida* and *Forza del Destino*.

An absolutely first rate cast is the first of the sets assets. Renata Tebaldi's warm, lyric soprano is eminently suited to the part of Mimi and this, coupled with her obvious sympathy for, and understanding of, the role, make her projection of Puccini's ill-starred heroine a model of singing characterization. The Rodolfo of Giacinto Prandelli is also noteworthy, first for its expressiveness and secondly for the thought and delicacy of feeling with which he imbues the part. This latter aspect of his performance is most unusual in operatic tenors. His voice never sounded better, and he sings throughout with beautiful phrasing and sterling musicianship.

The supporting cast is also of exceptional calibre. Giovanni Inghilleri, a veteran baritone, whose voice seems ageless, is Marcello. (Older collectors will recall with pleasure his stirring Amonasro in the 1928 Victor *Aida*). Musetta is pertly sung by Hilde Gueden and Rafel Arie is a sonorous Colline. The Chorus and Orchestra under Alberto Erede perform with enthusiasm and precision—an unusual but felicitous circumstance.

The success of the performance is due, in no little measure, to the stunning recording furnished by London's engineers. Such little details as sound effects are captured with amazing realism—how many persons at an actual performance ever hear the chink of coins as Schaunard puts money on the table in Act 1?

Comparison of this set with the earlier Columbia recording is impossible—there is none. It is respectfully suggested that the other record companies leave *La Bohème* alone—the present recording should stand for years as a model. W.

Spontini: La Vestale (complete). (Sung in Italian). Maria Vitale (soprano); Elena Nicolai (mezzo-soprano); Renato Gavarini (tenor); Alfredo Fineschì (baritone); Giuliano Ferrein, Albino Gaggi (bassos); with the EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Fernando Previtali. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1224) \$17.85.

Gasparo Spontini is remembered only for his opera *La Vestale* and that, in all probability, because of Ponselle's magnificent singing in, and delineation of,

the role of the priestess, Giulia. It is old-fashioned music, *La Vestale*—real grand opera, the form that was raised to such tremendous heights by Meyerbeer. Spontini's chief nemesis, however, was a young German composer Carl Maria von Weber, whose opera *Der Freischütz* cut short the run of Spontini's most ambitious work for the stage *Olympie*. In the main stream of music Spontini is considered a minor composer, and justly so; but his influence on two such dissimilar composers as Berlioz and Wagner was considerable.

Cetra has, one fears, sent out the second team, both artistically and technically, for this job. The voices are not impressive. Giulia is sung by Maria Vitale who is here, as in the recording of *I Lombardi*, a hard-voiced dramatic soprano inclined to shrillness. Her principal aria *Tu che invoco con orrore* is dramatic enough but has little of the sensuous beauty of tone that is required to make it come to life. As the High Priestess, Elena Nicolai reveals an ordinary voice and turns in a performance to match. Renato Gavarini is a somewhat strident Licinio, and Giuliano Ferrein lacks the sonority of voice required to lend dignity to the part of Pontifex Maximus.

Previtali's direction, as always, is excellent, but he has been short-changed as to singers and consequently can do very little to make the opera "sound" good. He has been further cheated in the matter of recording. The technical aspects of the set vary from poor to bad. The studio is "hard", the high's sound thin and wirey and the bass is hollow.

Musically the score has interest and contains, as one expects in grand opera, impressive, even massive, portions that are extremely effective.

It is unlikely that a complete *La Vestale* will be recorded again; thus much depends on how anxious one is for the work. The performance and recording were, to this reviewer, a distinct disappointment but the final decision, as always, lies with the buyer. However, *caveat emptor*. W.

Operatic Arias and Duets. (Sung in German). Helge Roswaenge (tenor) and Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone) with the Berlin State Opera Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Hans Steinkopf. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7027) \$5.95.

Contents: *La Traviata*—*Di provenza il mar*; *La Forza del Destino*—*Act III excerpts*; *Un Ballo in Maschera*—*Forse la soglia attinse*; *Così Fan Tutte*—*Un aura amorosa*; *Don Carlo*—*Dio che nell'alma infondere*.

Another fine Verdi disc, from Berlin, is issued this month by Urania. The record features seldom heard music from *La Forza del Destino*, *Don Carlos* and *Un Ballo in Maschera*. A performance of *Di provenza* from *La Traviata* included here falls into the category of the unnecessary while a stunning performance of *Un aura amorosa* from Mozart's *Così Fan Tutti* may be looked upon as a dividend.

The *Forza del Destino* music is of surpassing in-

terest. Not too well identified on either the labels or in the jacket notes, it develops that the first group of scenes Nos. 2, 3 and 4 from Act III concern the events leading up to, and those immediately following, the great duet *Solenne in quest'ora*. Both Roswaenge and Schlusnus are superb artists and have magnificent voices. They imbue the music with all the supercharged emotion written into it by Verdi, and the net result is one of great intensity and fine high excitement. The other *Forza* excerpt, scenes 7, 8 and 9 are a little less familiar. It is the finale to the third act, portions of which are usually omitted in performances in this country. The main portion, the duet, *Sleale! Il segreto fu dunque violata* was once recorded in abbreviated form by Caruso and de Luca and is here making its first appearance on LP discs. As is the other excerpt, it is fervently sung. The *Don Carlo* duet is a portion of the first act that culminates in the stirring *Dio che nell' alma infondere*. It is feelingly sung here by the two artists. Other Verdi items are the tenor recitative and aria *Forse la soglia attese . . . Ma se m'e forza* from "Un Ballo in Maschera" and the ubiquitous and unctuous *Di Provenza*. The former is spiritedly sung by Herr Roswaenge, the latter by Herr Schlusnus.

Urania should do something about the notes supplied, for there are two glaring errors that indicate careless proof reading and the thoughtless way of "identifying" the duets can be due only to laziness or incomplete knowledge of the music. To correct what might be misinformation for those unacquainted with the plots of the operas, Giorgio Germont does not sing *Di provenza* to Mlle. Valery, and Don Alvaro does not jump off a precipice at the end of *La Forza del Destino*. The excerpts are all sung in German, incidentally, a circumstance that is mitigated only by the magnificent singing. W.

Mozart and Verdi Arias. Hilde Gueden (soprano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-10" disc (*L-LPS-485) \$4.95.

Italian Operatic Arias. Helen Traubel (soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-7" discs in box (8V-WDM-1584) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-123) \$4.67.

Two excellent operatic discs, by very different sopranos, enliven this month's releases. Verdi figures prominently in each record and Mozart in one. This is all to the good for it insures the prospective purchaser of receiving his money's worth musically. The artists, Gueden and Traubel, are numbered among the top flight sopranos of today—and the resulting records are that curious mixture of good and bad that one has come to expect nowadays, due largely to the plethora of recordings being made.

Miss Gueden essays two arias from "Rigoletto" *Caro nome* and *Tutte le fest e al tempio* and sings them very well indeed, but does not erase memories of Berger or Pagliughi. Two arias from "Le Nozze

di Figaro" *Voi che sapete* and *Deh vieni non tardar* are somewhat less successful, largely because they are psychologically more demanding. Miss Gueden sings them very prettily and is moderately persuasive. Two arias from "Idomeneo" *Non temer amato bene* and *Se il Padre perdesse* complete the disc.

Miss Traubel confines herself to Italian opera, singing famous arias for dramatic soprano. There is the *Costa Diva* ("Norma"); *L'altra notte in fondo al mare* ("Mefistofele"); *Tacea la notte placida* ("Il Trovatore"); *Madre pietosa Vergine* and *Pace, pace mio Dio* ("La Forza del Destino"); and *Salce, salce* ("Otello"). Of this imposing group, two have been spoiled by misguided economies on the part of RCA-Victor. The *Norma* aria and the *Madre pietosa* are sung without the chorus, thereby losing a considerable portion of their effect. The aria from *Mefistofele* and the *Pace, pace* are gorgeous performances, showing all the vocal opulence one expects from Miss Traubel plus unusual care in phrasing and enunciation that makes for an extremely gratifying performance. The two remaining arias are well sung and not only add considerably to the artist's reputation but also reveal a hitherto unsuspected versatility on Miss Traubel's part.

Recording in both records is quite good. London reneges as far as notes are concerned; Victor's are comprehensive and intelligent. W.

VOCAL



Strauss: Der Zigeunerbaron ("The Gypsy Baron") (complete). (Sung in German). Emmy Loose, Hilde Zadek (sopranos); Julius Patzak (tenor); Alfred Poell (basso); with the Vienna State Opera Chorus and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LLP-418/49) \$11.90.

Johann Strauss' *Zigeunerbaron*, second in popularity only to *Die Fledermaus*, has now been recorded by a cast of singers equal in every respect, to the one that made the *Fledermaus* so memorable. In addition, there is the unquestioned advantage of a year's improvement in recording techniques. Thus this performance and recording is doubly welcome.

The cast, drawn from the Vienna State Opera, has been well chosen. Hilde Zadek is a superb Saffi. She infuses the song *So elend und so so treu* with all the Hungarian fire and passion that Strauss wrote into it and her other principal selection (*Hier in diesem Land*) is a model of perfection. Arsena is sung by Emmy Loose with charm and distinction. The old gypsy, Czippa, is in the capable hands of the veteran *mezzo* Rosette Anday. Julius Patzak, as Barinkay, is in his glory. The famous *Als flötter Geist* comes off in resounding fashion. Alfred Poell makes the most of his all too small part, singing the czardas *Her die Hand* in rousing style.

Clemens Krauss and the Vienna Philharmonic are old hands at this sort of thing and they play the

melodious score with enthusiasm. The Vienna State Opera Chorus also contributes to the general merriment. The chorus, *Auf, Vorbei ist die Nacht* is done in a sparkling manner that emphasizes its relationship to an earlier and more famous *Anvil Chorus*.

It is easy to understand, after hearing these superbly recorded discs, how *Die Zigeunerbaron* achieved over one thousand performances in Vienna alone in less than twenty years after its première.

W.

Lotte Lehmann's Farewell Recital. Lotte Lehmann (soprano) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 1-10" and 1-12" disc in folder (*PEM-BROKE LP) \$12.50.

A most unusual set of records is issued this month by Pembroke. On 16 February 1951 Mme. Lotte Lehmann presented her farewell recital at Town Hall, New York. Since recording equipment is available at all times in the hall, and since a few people sensed that this recital would be her last, a complete recording, with applause and a charming farewell speech, was made.

It hardly seems possible to realize, especially after hearing these records (which, incidentally, are astonishingly good considering the circumstances under which they were made) that Mme. Lehmann has been before the public for forty-one years. The voice is strong, clear and full of color. The artistry, of course, is magnificent—it has grown with the passing years.

There are four sets of *lieder* in the recital—the first is a group of five by Robert Schumann and includes such favorites as *Widmung* and *Alte Laute*. There follows a mixed group by Mendelssohn, Cornelius and Wagner (*Träume*). The intermission with the farewell speech comes next and then five songs by Robert Franz. The concluding section consists of a superb collection of Schubert *lieder* from *Die Schöne Müllerin* including *Wohin, Der Neugierige* and *Des Baches Wiegenlied*. Then, after announcing that she would "try" to sing *An die Musik*, Mme. Lehmann, sings the wonderful tribute to music with all her heart; just before the end of the song she stops, and the piano finishes alone.

The set is of considerable historic importance, and as a prime example of the art of singing it is invaluable. There will be many besides the Lehmann enthusiasts who will want this set. The records are attractively packaged and there are many photographs, candid and otherwise.

W.

Purcell: King Arthur. (Sung in English). Soloists and chorus directed by Fritz Kramer. 1-12" disc (*MAGIC-TONE MLP-1006) \$5.95.

Among Purcell's dramatic works, in which category *King Arthur* belongs, *Dido* and *Aeneas* is the only real opera. His other music for the theatre can be classified, variously, as masques, operatic scenes or as "dramatic music."

The Notes, if the merest outline of the plot can

be so dignified, refer to the present recording of *King Arthur* as an opera. This is incorrect. Purcell himself defines opera as "a story sung with the proper action" and this *King Arthur* was not. It is a work, written for the public stage, with certain set numbers composed for certain interpolated scenes of a play. It is a form of incidental music.

The recording presented here by Magic-Tone Records is a disappointment. To begin with, the voices are ordinary. There are not actually any sour notes but the performers are not in any way exceptional. Even more serious is the use of a piano and an organ to supply accompaniments. The music loses much of its character under this treatment, especially the Frost Scene where Purcell depicted the shivering cold by an instrumental tremolo. The effect is lost in this performance.

For a work as little known as *King Arthur* one reasonably expects (especially at \$5.95) some information regarding the work, but Magic-Tone do not even identify the singers with their roles! Such complete lack of interest in their wares can only have one result—limited sales. The present recording is one that, if properly handled from an artistic angle, would have been of permanent importance. As it is, however, one can only report that a distorted version of Purcell's *King Arthur* is available for those who are so inclined.

W.

A Hugo Wolf Lieder Recital. (Sung in German). Annamarie Simon (soprano) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano); Helge Roswaenge (tenor) and Margarete Klose (contralto) accompanied by Michael Raucheisen (piano). 1-12" disc (*URLP-7025) \$5.95.

Another Wolf *lieder* disc appears, making a total of five LP records devoted to the works of the Austrian master. This recording is impressive on several counts. Three top flight soloists are represented: Helge Roswaenge, Margarete Klose and a newcomer, Annamarie Simon. Another outstanding feature is a stunning performance, by Roswaenge, of the tremendous *Der Feuerreiter* ("The Fire-Rider").

Helge Roswaenge sings, in addition to the aforementioned song, three other *lieder*: *Denk' es o Seele*; *Gesellenlied*; and *Im Frühling*. To these songs the great tenor brings all the voice, all the art, that have made him world famous. No singer today gives more of himself in performance than this man. The sincerity, thoughtfulness and feeling he conveys are almost unique, particularly among *lieder* singers, yet he never steps over the bounds of good taste.

Margarete Klose is another well-known artist. Her pre-war HMV discs were always rewarding, and she brings the same rare artistry to the three songs here recorded. Especially noteworthy is the half-serious, half-mocking *Rat einer Älter* (*The Old Woman's advice*). Her two other songs are *Über Nacht* and *Gesang Weylas*.

Annamarie Simon reveals a fresh, youthful voice, very well trained and used with discretion and taste.

Her contribution is the largest of the three singers as she presents seven songs, including the wonderful *Mignon* (Kennst du das Land). Also outstanding are the delightful *Elfenlied* and the sombre *St. Nepomuks Vorabend*.

Accompaniments supplied by Raucheisen and Ulanowsky are very good. The recording is tastefully accomplished, and texts and translations are supplied. The record is highly recommended as being worth investigation by all lovers of good singing. W.

Sullivan: Patience. Darrell Fancourt, Peter Pratt, Leonard Osborn, Martyn Green, Alan Styler, Yvonne Dean, Ann Drummond-Grant, Muriel Harding, Ella Halman, Margaret Mitchell and members of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company with the New Promenade Orchestra conducted by Isidore Godfrey. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LLP-474/5) \$11.90.

Sullivan: Iolanthe. Ann Drummond-Grant, Martyn Green, Leonard Osborn, Eric Thornton, Fisher Morgan, Alan Styler, Ella Halman, Joyce Hill, Yvonne Dean, Margaret Mitchell and members of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company with the New Promenade Orchestra conducted by Isidore Godfrey. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LLP-469/70) \$11.90.

At long last patient Savoyards may avail themselves of these brilliant recordings of *Patience* and *Iolanthe*, done to a neat turn by the D'Oyly Cartes. A libretto is supplied with each album. Reproduction magnificent!

Gems from Sigmund Romberg Shows (Vol. V). Soloists with the Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw and Sigmund Romberg and his Orchestra. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1600) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-138) \$4.67.

RCA Victor continues with its series of recordings of "Gems from Sigmund Romberg Shows." The present is the fifth volume and it contains a number of less well-known selections. They are all beautifully sung by fine soloists assisted by the famous Robert Shaw Chorale. If you like Romberg melodies, you'll go for this recording in a big way. The selections are: *Tell Me, Daisy*; *I Bring a Love Song*; *French Military Marching Song*; *Lordy*; *One Flower Grows Alone in Your Garden*; and *Boys in Gray*.

Patrice Munsel Sings Strauss Waltzes. Patrice Munsel (soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1601) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-139) \$4.67.

If you would like vocal renditions of a group of popular Strauss waltzes, the brilliant young coloratura Patrice Munsel sings them in a gay and highly artistic manner. If you are a bit depressed this disc should certainly raise your drooping spirits. The selections are: *On the Beautiful Blue Danube*; *Wine,*

Woman and Song; *Emperor Waltz*; *Artists' Life*; *Gypsy Baron Waltz*; and *Tales from the Vienna Woods*.

Mozart: Motet—Exsultate, jubilate, K. 165 (Sung in Latin) and **Mozart: Zaide, K. 344—Ruhe sanft** (Sung in German). Barbara Troxell (soprano) with the National Gallery Orchestra conducted by Richard Bales. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 3 in E-flat for Horn and Orchestra, K. 447.** Mason Jones (horn) with the National Gallery Orchestra conducted by Richard Bales. 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-8) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

PIANO



Beethoven: Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 31 in A-flat, Op. 110.** Friedrich Gulda (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-150) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 29 in B-flat, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier"). Friedrich Gulda (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-422) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight") and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13** ("Pathétique"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57** ("Appassionata"). Orazio Frugoni (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7160) \$5.95.

Here we have some of Beethoven's most popular piano sonatas played by two brilliant young pianists. Friedrich Gulda was born in Vienna in 1930 and Orazio Frugoni in Switzerland in 1921 (Frugoni's parents were Italians). The latter, Mr. Frugoni, who has been living in the United States since 1947, and whose debut at New York's Town Hall was such a grand success, is better known to American music lovers. He has made a number of Vox recordings which have met with wide approval.

In view of the fact that Mr. Gulda is more or less a stranger in our midst, a word or two about this outstanding young artist is surely in order. As mentioned above he was born in Vienna in 1930 and began his piano studies at the age of seven. At twelve he became a pupil of Seidlhofer at the Vienna State Academy of Music. In 1947 he won first prize in the Geneva International Competition for pianists and in that same year appeared with great success at the Prague Festival. He has concertized on the Continent, in England and South America. Now he comes to America under the auspices of the famed impresario, S. Hurok.

Lack of space does not permit our going into detail about these several recordings but we do hope that our readers when the opportunity affords will give them their attention. We found listening to

the recordings of these fine young artists a rewarding experience.

First Piano Quartet Plays Gershwin. First Piano Quartet. 3-7" discs in box (♠V-WDM-1574) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (♠V-LM-125) \$4.67.

Here is a recording that is bound to have an immense sale. It has everything—tunes that are universally popular and a musical organization whose recordings have been on the best sellers list for years. Folks just never seem to get enough records by the First Piano Quartet. RCA Victor has been most successful in recording this group and the present disc is certainly no exception—the piano reproduction is superb.

The Gershwin pieces on this remarkable disc are: *Rhapsody in Blue*; *Summertime*; *Bess, You is My Woman Now*; *I Got Plenty O' Nuttin'*; *It Ain't Necessarily So*; *The Man I Love*; *Strike Up the Band*; and *An American in Paris*.

Music of Schubert in Piano Transcription—arr. Liszt-Taussig. Egon Petri (piano). 1-12" disc (♠C-ML-4436) \$5.45.

Seven of these transcriptions were made by Liszt and the eighth (*Andante and Variations*) by Liszt's great contemporary, Carl Taussig. All of them are virtuoso pieces for the pianist and all are extremely difficult. We are happy to report that Egon Petri is fully capable of the task that he has set for himself, and for those who enjoy superb piano playing this LP disc contains a wealth of such music. Columbia has supplied fine piano reproduction.

The selections are: *The Trout*; *Barcarole*; *Margaret at the Spinning Wheel*; *The Linden Tree*; *The Erl-King*; *Andante and Variations*; *Love's Message*; and *Soirées de Vienne*.

Kreisler Melodies. Arthur Whittimore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists). 3-7" discs in box (♠V-WDM-1585) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (♠V-LM-130) \$4.67.

We do not feel that these delightful little melodies of Fritz Kreisler are particularly suited for two-piano renditions. However, they are so popular that it is very probable that Whittimore and Lowe's concert audiences greet them with great applause—the tunes very likely get the applause rather than the two-piano renditions of them. The selections are: *Liebesleid*; *Liebesfreud*; *La Gitana*; *Stars in My Eyes*; *Caprice Viennois*; and *Tambourin Chinois*.

Fauré: Dolly, Op. 56. Robert and Gaby Casadesus (duo-pianists). One side, and **Fauré: Nocturne No. 7, Op. 74** and **Fauré: Barcarolle No. 5, Op. 66** and **Fauré: Impromptu No. 5, Op. 102.** Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-10" disc (♠C-ML-2205) \$4.

For a half-hour or so of delightful music by the distinguished French composer, Gabriel Fauré, a fine musician whose art since his death in 1924 is gradually being appreciated throughout the musical world,

the present disc is indicated. Both Gaby and Robert Casadesus are noted for their interpretations of the works of their compatriot.

Mozart: Sonata in F, K. 497. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata in C, K. 521.** Paul Badura-Skoda and Joerg Lemus (piano duo). 1-12" disc (♠WEST-WL-5082) \$5.95.

This disc is a fine addition to the recorded repertory of music for piano four hands. These Mozart sonatas are certainly delightful to listen to and they have been superbly played and faithfully recorded on this excellent disc.

Piano Solos. Ellen Ballon (piano). 1-10" disc (♠L-LPS-306) \$4.95.

Ellen Ballon will be remembered for her fine performance of the Villa-Lobos *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*, a recording of which was released by London a little over a year ago. Here we have Miss Ballon in a short recorded recital made up of the following pieces: *Prelude in G minor* (Bach-Siloti); *Impromptu in B flat minor, Op. 142, No. 3* (Schubert); *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 11 in A minor* (Liszt); *Etude in D flat No. 3* (Liszt); and *32 Variations in C minor* (Beethoven). Thus we have fine variety and one may easily realize that Miss Ballon is an artist of high calibre. We shall be looking forward to more recordings by this excellent pianist.

Chopin: Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58. Rudolf Firkusny (piano). 1-10" disc (♠C-ML-2201) \$4.

Firkusny gives a fine performance of this Chopin Sonata but we prefer the 12-inch Vox disc (♠VX-PL-6710) which contains, in addition to this selection, Schumann's *Carnaval*, both superbly played by Novães.

Ravel: Le Tombeau de Couperin. One side, and **Ravel: Gaspard de la Nuit.** Bernhard Weiser (piano). 1-12" disc (♠REB-LP-8) \$5.95.

The American pianist, Bernhard Weiser, plays these well-known Ravel pieces in a highly acceptable manner. The recording has been successfully accomplished.

Haydn: Sonata No. 43 in A-flat and Haydn: Sonata No. 51 in D. Charles Rosen (piano). One side, and **Haydn: Notturmo No. 4 in F** (Partita in F). EMS Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edvard Fendler. 1-12" disc (♠EMS-LP-3) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

HARPSICHORD

Bach: Anna Magdalena Book (Vol. I). Kurt Rapf (harpsichord) with Maja Weis-Osborn (soprano). 1-12" disc (♠BG-BG-510) \$5.95.

This remarkable LP disc contains nineteen short



selections from Anna Magdalena Bach's "Little Note Book." In that unusual volume Bach's young second wife copied various selections that apparently caught her fancy, many of them by lesser composers than her illustrious husband. Bach started the book for his wife by copying in it two of his piano-suites and from then on the choice of selections seems to have been left to her. There are compositions in great variety, most of them for special occasions such as weddings, birthdays, funerals and all sorts of social gatherings. For the present record nineteen of them have been chosen—some of them short pieces for the harpsichord and others for soprano with harpsichord accompaniments.

We found this record altogether delightful and do not hesitate to recommend it to all music lovers who are interested in the music of Bach's period.

Couperin: Harpsichord Suite No. 16. One and one-half sides, and **Couperin: Harpsichord Suite No. 26—Pantomime.** Eta Harich-Schneider. 1-10" disc (*UR-URLP-5003) \$4.75.

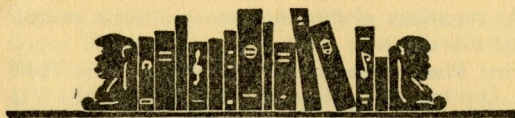
Madame Harich-Schneider's recording of Couperin's Suite No. 24 issued by Urania several months ago met with considerable success, and so we feel that the present LP disc has a market awaiting it. We should remark that the recording of the harpsichord on the present disc is of particular brilliance. For those interested in the technical quality of the reproduction of this instrument the disc listed above is indicated.

Bach: Italian Concerto in F and Bach: (4) Duets. One and one-half sides, and **Bach: Aria with (10) Variations in the Italian Style.** Rosalyn Tureck (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-117) \$5.45.

Bach: Ouverture à la manière Française ("Partita No. 7, in B minor"). Rosalyn Tureck (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-114). \$5.45.

Bach: Fantasia in A minor and Bach: Toccata in D minor. One side, and **Bach: Chaconne in D minor.** Reine Gianoli (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5101) \$5.95.

The three LP discs listed above contain a wealth of Bach keyboard music played by two eminent women pianists. Rosalyn Tureck is well-known to record collectors because of her many fine recordings. Although Reine Gianoli is highly regarded throughout Western Europe, her name will doubtless be new to most American music lovers. Miss Gianoli began her studies with Madame Giraud-Latarse and later studied with Yves Nat and Alfred Cortot. She has appeared with many famous European orchestras under such distinguished conductors as Weingartner, Paray, von Hoesslin et al. She was engaged for the second time at the Strasbourg Festival in 1950.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Biblotone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, FEST—Festival, HS—Hady's Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PLM—Polymusic, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 Ⓞ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PAGE 16